BUDDHAS AND KAMI IN JAPAN

Honji suijaku as a combinatory paradigm

Edited by Mark Teeuwen and Fabio Rambelli

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This volume offers a multidisciplinary approach to the combinatory traditions that dominated pre-modern and early modern Japanese religion. Common to these traditions is the fact that they are based on the notion of *honji suijaku* ("the original forms of deities and their local traces"), which defines local deities as manifestations of universal divinities. The authors question received accounts of the interaction between Japanese Buddhism and Shinto, and present a more dynamic and variegated religious world, where pairings of Buddhist "originals" and local "traces" did not constitute one-to-one associations, but complex combinatory networks based on semiotic operations, doctrines, myths, and legends.

The book's chapters, all based on specific case studies, discuss the *honji suijaku* paradigm from a number of different perspectives, always combining historical and doctrinal analysis with interpretive insights.

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PREFACE

Japanese and Chinese personal names are given in the traditional order, with the family name first. For Japanese names and terms, the Hepburn transcription is used; Chinese names and terms are given in *pinyin*, followed, if relevant, by the Japanese reading. Characters are given in the text only when this is deemed necessary for the argument, or when the characters are so obscure as to be difficult to find in reference works and dictionaries.

Dates prior to 1873 are given according to the traditional lunar calendar, and have not been changed to corresponding solar dates. Therefore, "the fifth month of 1590" does not coincide with May 1590 in the solar calendar. For the sake of brevity, dates are sometimes given in numbers, e.g. Jōwa 1 (834)/4/26. This stands for the first year of Jōwa (834), 4th month, 26th day.

Finally, a note on periodisation. A number of conventional period names are used in the text, sometimes without dates. For easy reference, these dates are listed here:

Nara period:	710–794
Heian period:	794–1185
Kamakura period:	1185–1333
Muromachi period:	1336–1568
Edo period:	1600–1867
Meiji period:	1868–1912

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INTRODUCTION

Combinatory religion and the *honji suijaku* paradigm in pre-modern Japan

Mark Teeuwen and Fabio Rambelli

This book discusses a central issue in the history of pre-modern Japanese religion, namely the idea that local, native deities (*kami*) are emanations of universal, Buddhist divinities – a notion known in Japanese as *honji suijaku* ("original forms of deities and their local traces"). It was this idea that lay at the basis of Buddhist cults of kami, of the incorporation of kami shrines in Buddhist temples, and of the development of Buddhist-inspired kami cults which at a later stage developed into an independent religion, namely Shinto. "Originals" refers to the Buddhist divinities that show their compassion for the Japanese by appearing in their distant land, in the periphery of the Buddhist world, as "temporary emanations" – in the guise of kami who are now understood to be "traces" of Buddhist "originals."

This topic is of great interest for a number of reasons. First of all, Japanese religion is often categorised under the twin headings Buddhism and Shinto, in spite of the fact that the worship of "Shinto" deities played a central role in Japanese Buddhism, and that Shinto hardly existed as an autonomous cultic system – for the very reason that its deities were worshipped first and foremost as emanations of Buddhist divinities. Although the view that Shinto and Buddhism formed two distinct traditions in pre-modern Japan has by now been largely abandoned, little work has been done to clarify what the combinatory traditions of pre-modern Japan actually looked like, and how they functioned. It is on this question that this book tries to shed new light.

In particular, the book will draw attention to the fact that the paradigm of "originals and traces" was much more than merely a way of turning native deities into Buddhist figures. This paradigm had important consequences, ranging from epistemology to economics, politics, social ideology, and ideas about subjectivity. Epistemologically, it is interesting to note that originals and traces were not one-to-one associations, but complex combinations of several deities based on sophisticated semiotic operations, myths, legends,

and so on – all procedures that we will investigate. This is directly related to subjectivity, since each deity was a combination of a plurality of divine entities. In this respect, one of the most interesting features of this paradigm is the fact that its deities were Indian, Chinese, Korean, and Japanese, in a consciously and coherently transnational fashion.

Furthermore, the idea that local phenomena are "one with" some absolute sacred source was used widely to sanctify and legitimate many different kinds of practices throughout the medieval and early modern periods. We find, for example, that temple lands were defined as local emanations in Japan of Buddhist paradises; that the practice of writing Japanese poetry was "one with" the chanting of sacred Buddhist spells; or that the work of a carpenter was "the same as" the sacred acts of Indian buddhas. These few examples already show how profound the cultural, political, and economic impact of this paradigm has been over an extended period of time. In this book we shall draw attention to these various functions of the paradigm, and illustrate them by analysing concrete historical examples of its use.

The *honji suijaku* paradigm is an example of a combinatory religious system that could fruitfully be compared with similar systems in other cultures. Curiously, it would seem that the closest parallels to the Japanese situation are to be found not in neighbouring Korea or China, but in Indian and Indianised cultures further south. Here we think, for example, of the co-existence of the *brahman* and the Buddhist monk in Thailand, as described by Stanley J. Tambiah (1970); or of the situation in Nepal, as analysed and compared with Japan by David N. Gellner (1997). Many parallels can also be drawn with the Buddhist and Bönpo monks of Tibet and their engagement with local spirits as discussed by Geoffrey Samuel (1993). Further afield, we only have to think of the classical religions of the Roman Empire, or the many local forms of Christianity in South America, Africa and other places to recognise that combinatory processes are ubiquitous throughout the world.

Such a comparative perspective, however, is beyond the scope of this book. Here, we will limit ourselves to exploring the historical development and the theological, social and political functioning of the *honji suijaku* paradigm in Japan. This introductory chapter will first sketch our general approach to pre-modern Japanese religion and the place of the *honji suijaku* paradigm in it. Then, we shall outline some strands in the history of *honji suijaku* thought and practice, and explore its internal logic and its functionality within Japanese society.

Pre-modern Japanese religion: a two-room flat?

The Japanese religious scene of the classical and medieval periods was by no means a simple affair. Elements from different traditions, some autochthonous and others of continental origin, combined to form a mêlée of practices, ideas and beliefs that at first sight appears to us as an inextricable tangle.

This characteristic of pre-modern Japanese religion has important repercussions for its study. Even if one succeeds in isolating a single thread from the tangle, one is left with the difficult question of what relevance it may have had in its knotty context. At an even more fundamental level, the question imposes itself of why seemingly contradictory elements were combined in ritual and doctrinal contexts in what to us often seems to be a bewilderingly arbitrary fashion. What was the significance of all this crisscrossing of traditions, and why was the phenomenon so ubiquitous? In short, we end up asking ourselves: are we to take all this "syncretism" seriously?

Two scholars who have addressed these questions, and have come to widely diverging conclusions, are Ivan Morris in the 1960s and Allan Grapard more recently. Both stand out for trying to make sense of religiosity in the Heian period (794–1185) by addressing the "tangle" as a whole, rather than taking the more usual but also more sectarian method of singling out one of its many threads. If we are to characterise their approaches in a word, we might say that while Morris could not bring himself to deal with Heian religion on its own terms, Grapard does just that.

Discussing the world of *The Tale of Genji* (early eleventh century), Morris marvels over the "facile blending of beliefs" that he regards as characteristic of the court aristocracy of this period. He notes: "For Murasaki [Shikibu, the author of *The Tale of Genji*] and her countrymen there was no idea that the acceptance of one set of beliefs (Buddhism) might preclude adherence to another (Shintoism), or that either was incompatible with a mass of complex superstitions deriving both from native tradition and from Chinese folklore."[1] To Morris, Heian religiosity remains a form of "eclecticism" in which "various religions and superstitions have become . . . inextricably entwined,"[2] rather than an integrated system that made sense to its practitioners. Here, Morris' narrow definition of religion, as "the quest for moral or ethical righteousness, or for purity, salvation, or enlightenment,"[3] prevents him from accepting a form of religiosity completely alien to his own.

Grapard's take on the subject is radically different.[4] He describes the genesis, in the course of the Nara period (710–94), of a complex cultic system that integrated both (Shinto) shrines and (Buddhist) temples under the aegis of the imperial court. The main function of these shrines and temples was to "protect the state" (*chingo kokka*) – that is, the imperial lineage and the aristocratic houses that supported it. Grapard points out that the basic metaphor behind the ritual protection of the state was that of the human body. The state was embodied in the emperor, and state rituals often focused on the person of the emperor. The problems of the state were envisaged as physical diseases

1 Morris 1979, p. 106 (originally published by Oxford University Press in 1964).
2 Ibid., p. 105.
3 Ibid., p. 136.
4 Grapard (1999).

that could be cured in a ritual manner through "magic, manipulation of symbols, and medicine."[5] The main paradigms of ritual curing were esoteric rites of penitence and autochthonous rites of purification, both of which aimed at "the removal of baleful omens concerning whatever might threaten the human representatives of [the] state."[6] These rituals combined Buddhist, Daoist (or, more accurately, Yin-Yang), and indigenous elements as mutually reinforcing components of an ideologically coherent system.

From the mid-Heian period onwards, Grapard notes a trend towards the privatisation and individualisation of such rituals.[7] Not only the state, but also the individual was subject to higher influences, be they the will of local deities, buddhas and bodhisattvas, as revealed through oracles and divination, or of planets and stars or the forces of Yin and Yang, as made apparent through complicated calendrical and directional computations. The result was an "impressive network of limitations and censorship of the body and mind, which came to be increasingly ritualized."[8]

The approaches of Morris and Grapard to Heian religious practices can be contrasted in many ways. While Morris stresses the "moral or ethical" dimension of religion, Grapard emphasises its sociopolitical aspects. Where Morris sees a superstitious and superficial syncretism, Grapard detects a sophisticated combinatory system unified by shared ontological concerns. And finally, Morris treats "Shintoism" and Buddhism as two distinct religions so different that they might be described as each other's "antithesis," while Grapard consistently places the term Shinto between inverted commas, and stresses the fact that the cults of "Shinto" shrines were thoroughly incorporated in the combinatory system of the age. On the phrase *shinbutsu shūgō*, "amalgamation of kami and Buddhism," which is commonly used to describe the emergence of this combinatory system, Grapard writes: "It is crucial to be aware that the expression *shinbutsu shūgō* does not designate a syncretic blending of abstract entities such as Shinto and Buddhism, whatever those may have been in the early days, nor does it designate loose mixtures without rationale."[9]

Here, Grapard draws on the work of Kuroda Toshio. It is no exaggeration to state that Kuroda's writings on religion and the state in late classical and medieval Japan have revolutionised the study of Japanese religion.[10] Of special importance has been his insistence on studying medieval Japanese religion as a whole, rather than as a collection of autonomous sects and schools. Especially, Kuroda points out that a categorisation of religious phenomena in classical and medieval Japan under the twin headings "Buddhism"

5 Ibid., p. 534.
6 Ibid., p. 535.
7 On this subject see in particular Hayami Tasuku (1975).
8 Ibid., p. 542.
9 Grapard (1992a), p. 74.
10 Kuroda Toshio (1975), (1981), (1989), and (1990).

and "Shinto" obscures more than it reveals. Kuroda argues that Shinto did not exist as an "independent religion" before the modern period, but functioned as a "component" of a complex cultic system, which was Buddhist in nature but also included non-Buddhist elements.[11] Most conspicuous among these were Chinese Yin-Yang practices and Japanese cults of local deities (kami). In Kuroda's view, these cults of local deities should not be seen as an independent religious tradition parallel to, or in competition with, Buddhism, but rather as a fully integrated component of the dominant cultic system of the age, which he termed "*kenmitsu* Buddhism."[12] In Kuroda's terminology, *kenmitsu* or "exoteric-esoteric" Buddhism does not refer to a particular Buddhist school, but serves to describe the complicated institutional structure of the late classical and medieval Japanese cultic system. In this system, eight schools functioned as a state-sanctioned Buddhist "orthodoxy." Seven of these schools maintained their own exoteric teachings (the eighth, Shingon, was exclusively esoteric), but at the same time all schools incorporated esoteric practices, and functioned as variations on combined exoteric-esoteric themes, rather than as theologically incompatible rivals.

Kuroda's view broke radically with earlier accounts of Shinto history, which posed the existence of an unbroken tradition of non-Buddhist kami worship from the earliest years of the Japanese state to modern times. His view has since formed the departing point for a number of Western studies of shrine cults in Japan.[13] These studies have abandoned the premise that premodern Japanese religion was something comparable to a two-room flat, occupied jointly by shrines practising Shinto in room A, and temples practising Buddhism in room B, with some intermingling going on in the corridor. Rather, they see kami cults and Buddhism as twin elements in a system that was completely mixed, institutionally, ritually, and doctrinally, without any "pure" parts remaining. As Neil McMullin puts it, "through the millennium from the middle of the Heian period to the modern age, . . . all so-called Buddhist institutions were at least partly Shinto, and all so-called Shinto institutions were at least partly Buddhist. In other words, all major religious institutions in Japan combined both Buddhist and Shinto elements into complex, integrated wholes. This institutional amalgam both reflected and generated Buddhist–Shinto doctrinal and ritual syntheses."[14]

Drawing on the work of Tsuda Sōkichi,[15] Kuroda points out that in the classical and medieval periods, the term "Shinto" (*shintō*) did not designate an independent religion, but was used first and foremost as no more than a

11 Kuroda (1981).
12 See Kuroda (1975); in English, Kuroda (1989); Dobbins (ed.) (1996); also Rambelli (1994).
13 A few examples are Naumann (1988), Grapard (1988, 1992a), McMullin (1988), Teeuwen (1996), and Scheid (2001).
14 McMullin (1989a), p. 8.
15 Tsuda Sōkichi (1948).

synonym for "kami." By medieval times, local deities called kami or *shintō* (or, rather, *jindō*, as the word was pronounced at this time[16]) were almost universally understood to be "the form in which the Buddha converts and saves human beings." In other words, kami were seen as local manifestations of the powers of non-local buddhas. In particular, Kuroda stresses that the kami were believed to have the power to reward and punish. Since the most powerful kami were worshipped first and foremost by the secular élite (be it the court, the shogunate, or a large temple complex with considerable secular power), as a rule the kami punished and rewarded in the name of the powers that be. Thus the kami functioned both as local manifestations of more elevated Buddhist divinities, and, at the same time, as supernatural powers under the control of the secular élite. It is no coincidence that this indirectly identifies the ruling élite with the Buddhist realm. By controlling the worship of kami, who were in turn identified as local manifestations of the Buddhist truth, secular power became identified with sacred power, and both were legitimated and strengthened in the process. We will have more to say on the essential relation between power and *honji suijaku* below.

All this impresses on us that throughout the pre-modern period, the kami (or at least those kami who were of importance to the élites) were worshipped nearly exclusively in a Buddhist context, while at the same time, cults of local deities constituted a core component of Japanese Buddhism. Needless to say, the repercussions of this fact for the study of pre-modern Japanese religion are enormous. Reflecting the present situation in which the different Buddhist sects and Shinto constitute autonomous religious organisations, the bulk of both Japanese and Western studies of Japanese religion has concentrated on "pure" Buddhist or, to a lesser degree, Shinto traditions. The study of Buddhist forms of kami worship, which here emerge as central to pre-modern Japanese religion, has as yet hardly been embarked upon.

Clearly, the *honji suijaku* paradigm constituted the linchpin of the cultic system of pre-modern Japan: it was by combining individual deities from different cultic traditions that the multifaced divinities of pre-modern Japan were construed and arranged functionally and hierarchically in a structured divine realm. It is no exaggeration to state that an analysis of the functioning of this paradigm is the shortest route to grasping the essence of Japan's pre-modern cultic system. First, however, we need to trace the historical emergence and development of *honji suijaku* in the course of the classical and medieval periods.

16 Teeuwen (2002) points out that the Chinese word *shendao* (in Japan read *jindō*) was introduced to Japan as a Buddhist term denoting "the realm of gods," often with the negative connotation of "gods in need of Buddhist salvation." This word developed into a designation for a "Way" focusing on the *kami* only in the fourteenth century, and it was first at this point that a new, "pure" reading *shintō* was introduced.

Historical processes of amalgamation

The process of *shinbutsu shūgō* or "amalgamation of kami and Buddhism" was first studied by Tsuji Zennosuke in the late Meiji period (1868–1912).[17] His findings have since been refined by scholars such as Tamura Enchō, Hori Ichirō, Takatori Masao, Murayama Shūichi and many others, but still form the basic framework for our understanding of the amalgamation process.[18] In short, Tsuji envisioned a slow development over four centuries (starting *c*. 700, and reaching its final conclusion by *c*. 1100), through which the kami were gradually integrated in the Buddhist pantheon. The process started by defining the kami as sentient beings in need of Buddhist salvation, and culminated in the development of the *honji suijaku* paradigm. Here, we shall summarise the present *status questionis*, and at the same time draw attention to some of its limitations and blind spots.

The emergence of the honji suijaku *paradigm*

The process of amalgamation that led up to the emergence of the *honji suijaku* paradigm is usually thought to have passed through four phases. What follows is a brief summary of the main features of each of these phases.

Buddhas as foreign kami

Buddhism was introduced to Japan in the mid-sixth century, and after a slow start, it became established as part of the cultic system of prominent clans and the imperial court in the early seventh century. During this first phase of Japanese Buddhism, Buddhist divinities were worshipped as "foreign kami" (*adashikuni no kami*), different from Japan's own kami only in provenance and ritual practice, but not in character. In the first accounts of buddha worship in Japan, the buddhas behave in exactly the same way as the native kami: they were thought to cause diseases when angered, and to lend their power to the clan that conducted their cult, if only they were worshipped correctly and generously. As long as the "buddha-kami" functioned simply as an imported variant of kami, amalgamation with the local kami in a Buddhist direction did not occur.

In the course of the seventh century, however, Buddhist pressure on kami worship gradually became apparent. This pressure often emerged in the form of conflicts over sites and materials sacred to the kami. The appropriation of pre-Buddhist sacred places, and their transformation into abodes of buddhas

17 Tsuji Zennosuke (1955). The first version of this essay was published in *Shigaku zasshi* 18 (1907), in six installments (issues 1, 4, 5, 8, 9, and 12).

18 E.g. Tamura Enchō (1954), Hori Ichirō (1954), Takatori Masao (1982), Murayama Shūichi (1957).

and bodhisattvas, was an important factor in the early spread of Buddhism, not only in Japan but also elsewhere.

Many kami were revered in sacred groves or at the foot of sacred hills, where the cutting of trees was forbidden; also, trees or wooden pillars were used in kami ritual as sacred containers of the kami spirits. Due to the building boom that accompanied the rapid expansion of the Yamato state, and also to its policy of founding numerous large temples, the treatment of kami trees soon became a point of contention. In *Nihon shoki* (720), we read that Emperor Kōtoku (r. 645–54) was accused of "honouring Buddhism and belittling the kami (*jindō*)" because he allowed trees from sacred groves to be cut.[19] Empress Saimei (r. 655–61) used trees from the Asakura shrine grove in northern Kyushu to build a temporary residence during her campaign against the Korean state of Silla, and thus angered the kami. Soon after, a fire destroyed the palace, the imperial staff was killed by an epidemic, and eventually even the empress died.[20] Documents also report of temples that were moved to a different location because of hostility from the kami in neighbouring shrines. Such was the case with Kudara no Ōdera, originally built by Shōtoku Taishi (574–622). When it was moved to Tōchi, the kami from nearby Kobe shrine were said to have provoked several fires in the compound, until Emperor Tenmu (r. 673–86) moved the temple to Takechi and renamed it Takechi no Ōdera. This temple was eventually moved to Nara under the new name of Daianji.[21] From this tale it is easy to gauge the hostility of local clans against a temple established by the central government.

More commonly, however, narratives tell of Buddhism's success in accommodating and controlling the deities of the lands from which the timber used for their construction was taken. One example relates to the construction of the Gangōji in Asuka, during the reign of Empress Suiko (r. 592–628). Here, a woodcutter who tried to fell an old zelkova tree in the place where the temple was going to be built, died. His replacement died as well, and no one was willing to approach the tree anymore. On a rainy night, a monk hid inside the hollow of the trunk, posing as a traveller casually seeking shelter from the rain. At midnight, he heard a voice lamenting: "Until now I have killed the men who came to cut me, one after another, but sooner or later they will succeed." It added: "If they encircle me with a linen rope, recite the Nakatomi formula (*Nakatomi no saimon*),[22] and an ascetic puts a black rope around me, then they will be able to cut me down and there will be nothing I can do – alas!"

19 *Nihon shoki*, NKBT 68, p. 268.

20 NKBT 68, pp. 348–50.

21 *Daianji garan engi narabi ni ruki shizaichō*, in DNBZ 118, pp. 115–16.

22 A synonym of *Nakatomi harae* or *Ōharae no kotoba*: the sacred formula read during the *ōharae*, an important purification ceremony that took place in the sixth and twelfth months of the year, officiated by members of the Nakatomi sacerdotal house. For an English translation of the formula, see Philippi (1990), pp. 76–7.

The monk, rejoicing, reported everything to the court, and soon the tree was felled without further mishaps.[23] Interestingly, the tree in this tale was aware that it would not survive, and that the construction of the temple was unavoidable – a sort of "manifest destiny" of Buddhism in Japan.[24] Also, the fact that a typical kami liturgy (*shimenawa* ropes, the Nakatomi formula, etc.) was used to cut this tree in order to establish a Buddhist temple is another indication of the complex relations between Buddhist institutions and local kami cults already at this early stage.

Kami as sentient beings

The first signs of amalgamation are commonly traced to the late seventh century, and took the concrete form of so-called "shrine temples" (*jingūji*, or also *jinganji*). These temples were founded near shrines with the explicit aim of improving upon the character of the kami worshipped there by offering them Buddhist rituals.

The first known shrine temples are the Miyoshidera (Bingo province), built in worship of "all the kami" on the occasion of Empress Saimei's Silla expedition in 661,[25] and clan temples of priestly lineages of the Usa Hachiman shrine in Buzen province (Hokkyōji and Kokūzōji, founded *c.* 683). Better documented is the founding of *jingūji* at the Kehi shrine (Echizen) in 715, the Wakasahiko shrine (Wakasa) in 717, the Kashima shrine (Hitachi) in *c.* 750, and the Tado shrine (Ise) in 763. Available sources mention more than twenty shrine temples founded in the course of the eighth and ninth centuries; but it is likely that there were many more.[26] The shrine temples of which records remain were typically built at prominent regional shrines, in the periphery of the Yamato state.

In the few cases on which we have detailed information, the founding of the shrine temple was initiated by local clan leaders, and put into practice by mountain ascetics. Two important developments that prepared the ground for this phenomenon were, on the one hand, the transformation of local kami into human-like ancestors of patrilinear clans, and, on the other, the spread of ascetic practice in the mountains as a part of Buddhist training. Both can be related to the intense influence of Chinese culture that characterised the second half of the seventh century: the Japanese clans were

23 *Konjaku monogatarishū* 11, no. 22, in NKBT 24, pp. 100–2.

24 On this tale see also Yamaguchi Masao (2000), esp. pp. 105–9.

25 The founding of Miyoshidera is recounted in *Nihon ryōiki* (early ninth century), NKBT 70, pp. 91–3. Although this account is extremely short on details, the excavation of a large temple from the Hakuhō period (645–710) in the modern city of Miyoshi adds credibility to it.

26 Tsuji Hidenori (1986), pp. 48–9. Sagai Tatsuru (1988) has collected data on 1,100 shrine temples from the seventh to the mid-nineteenth century, and points out that more than a hundred temples containing the word *jingūji* in their name still exist today.

construed according to Chinese patrilinear principles, and Japanese monks learned to practise in the mountains during their study abroad at Chinese temples.[27]

The founding of shrine temples was usually triggered and legitimated by "oracles" from the kami. The following oracle of the kami of Tado, recorded in a source from *c*. 788,[28] is representative:

> At this time (i.e. in 763), a certain person was possessed by the kami and said: "I am the kami of Tado. Because I have committed grave offences over many kalpas, I have received the karmic retribution of being born as a kami (*jindō*). Now I wish to escape from my kami state once and for all, and take refuge in the Three Treasures of Buddhism."

The wandering ascetic Mangan Zenji, who "was staying at a nearby chapel," acted upon the wish of the kami and "cleared a space on the southern fringe of the mountain where the kami resided, built a small chapel in which he installed an image of the kami, and entitled it the Great Bodhisattva of Tado." Local officials supported the enterprise by donating a bell tower with a bronze bell, and construction of a three-storey pagoda was begun. In 780 four of the temple's "privately ordained" monks were officially recognised by the court and allowed to take the tonsure; also, the court assisted in completing the pagoda. By 781 the temple had become a centre for ascetics from the provinces of Ise, Mino, Owari and Shima, and a Dharma Hall, monks' quarters and a bathhouse had been added. This brief history of the establishment of the Tado shrine temple illustrates how the success of such temples depended on a dynamic relationship between enterprising ascetics, local élites and the court.

The case of Tado is somewhat special in that the kami himself seems to have been enshrined in the shrine temple in the form of an image, and even given the title of bodhisattva. There is actually some doubt whether this really was the case.[29] Kami images and the title of bodhisattva are usually associated with the next stage of amalgamation; in fact, the kami of Tado

27 See Tsuji Hidenori (1991). In fact, the very notion that local deities can be converted into Dharma-protectors through Buddhist ritual can be traced to Chinese sources imported to Japan, notably the Liang and Tang *Gaosengzhuan*; see Yoshida Kazuhiko (1996).

28 *Ise no kuni Kuwana-gun Tado jingūji garan engi narabi ni shizaichō* (*c*. 788), ZGR 27B, pp. 350–55. For two analyses of this source, see Yoshie Akio (1996), ch. 1, and Yoshida Kazuhiko (1996).

29 The inventory that forms the bulk of the Tado *shizaichō* mentions images of the buddha Yakushi and the bodhisattvas Miroku, Kannon and Daiseishi, an image of Shōtoku Taishi, paintings of the Pure Lands of Amida and Yakushi, and paintings of Kannon, but makes no mention of Mangan's image of the *kami* of Tado. (There are some lacunae in the text, one of which probably hiding images of Amida and Śākyamuni.) This suggests that here, too, practice focused on Buddhist figures rather than on the "bodhisattva of Tado."

appears to be one of only very few kami other than Hachiman (on whom more will be said below) that were referred to as a bodhisattva. More typically, shrine temples focused on a buddha image of the founding ascetic's choice. For unknown reasons, this was in most cases a form of Kannon (Skt. Avalokiteśvara) or Yakushi (Bhaiṣajyaguru), two popular buddhas who were also otherwise the most common figures enshrined in temples. It would seem that shrine temples did not differ from other temples either in the choice of buddhas enshrined or rituals performed; the only distinction was the shrine temple's connection to a shrine, and its stated aim of increasing the power and "mellowing" the character of this shrine's kami. The founding of shrine temples was informed by the notion that kami are sentient beings in need of Buddhist salvation, whose powers and character can be rendered more beneficial and controllable through contact with the Buddhist Dharma. The merit (or good karma) raised by the temple was transferred to the kami, in the hope that this would "increase their power, and thus cause the Buddhist Dharma to flourish, wind and rain to moisten the earth at the right times, and the five grains to produce good crops."[30]

In this sense, shrine temples were perhaps little different from clan temples, which constituted by far the largest category of early Japanese temples. Clan temples (*ujidera*) were built to commemorate the death of a clan leader, and their main task was to transfer merit to the spirits of the clan's ancestors. Their ultimate aim was to ensure that the assembled clan ancestors would protect their descendents, and not harass and harm them. Here, too, Buddhist ritual was used to "improve" the character of potentially dangerous spirits through contact with the Buddhist Dharma.

Many scholars have stressed the missionary character of the practice of founding shrine temples. This phenomenon is indeed a characteristic example of the way in which early Japanese Buddhism was rooted in pre-Buddhist sacred places. Typically, Buddhism overtook pre-Buddhist sacred sites by arguing that the native kami were violent and untrustworthy because of their delusion; therefore they needed to be transformed into Buddhist entities, so as to be pacified and rendered benevolent. Samuel's analysis (1993) of the Buddhist "taming" of local deities in Tibet comes to mind as a close parallel to developments in Japan. Irene H. Lin's essay in this book explores an intriguing early example of how native divine beings were "subjugated" by Buddhism and transformed into protectors and servants of the Dharma.

Another practice that illustrates this process of subjugation is the appropriation for Buddhist purposes of materials sacred to the kami – most commonly, timber from trees housing kami spirits or from kami groves.[31]

30 Ibid.

31 For a more detailed account of the role of materiality, especially trees, in the diffusion of Buddhism in Japan, see Rambelli (2001b).

Buddhist texts contain various descriptions of the relations between kami, trees, and buddha images. *Kōryūji raiyūki* (1499), for example, tells that wood from an old sacred tree was used to make a statue of Yakushi, which was placed in the sanctuary of Mukō Myōjin at Otokuni in Yamashiro province. The statue soon displayed miraculous powers, and was later enshrined at Gantokuji temple in Nishiyama. In 864, when Emperor Seiwa (r. 858–76) was ill, he ordered Dōshō (798–875), abbot of the Kōryūji, to move the miraculous image of Yakushi from the Gantokuji to his own temple, and to perform healing rituals with it. Mukō Myōjin, the deity of Otokuni district, followed the Yakushi image and established its abode in a zelkova tree on the Kōryūji precincts, where a shrine was built. When the kami moved into it the tree at first withered, but it recovered later; therefore it was called the "Shrine of the Tree-Withering Deity" (Kogare Myōjinsha).[32] In this case, a deity moved to a tree in order to be exposed to Buddhism, and caused temporary damage to that tree.

A later, but nevertheless revealing, example can be quoted from the medieval Tendai encyclopedia *Asabashō* (1259). Here we read that a giant tree in Ōmi province, whose shadow extended for several hundred kilometres, was felled upon imperial orders. Its trunk was cut into three logs that were floated down the river, and wherever they stopped an epidemic burst out. Finally the emperor ordered that these logs be used to make three statues of Kannon. One was enshrined in Shigadera in Ōmi province, another in the Gōrinji in Kawachi province, and the last one was the eleven-headed Kannon of Hasedera near Nara.[33] Here again we see the ordering intervention of Buddhism, eliminating the calamities caused by unpredictable local deities. Subsequently, these same deities materially and dramatically reveal their Buddha-nature: when turned into icons of Kannon, they show enlightened compassion.

In cases such as these, an antecedent form of the *honji suijaku* paradigm is directly inscribed in the materiality of the objects that represent it. Interestingly, however, Buddhism's attempts to domesticate and pacify the kami by incorporating them, also materially, within its system, ended up by producing ambiguous sacred entities. The above example of the dangerous sacred tree becoming a buddha (in this case, the bodhisattva Kannon) can

32 *Kōryūji raiyūki*, in DNBZ 119, p. 80.

33 *Asabashō*, *kan* 200, in T. Zuzō 9, pp. 756–7. In this version, the reason for the felling of the giant tree is that it caused epidemics. See also Seta Katsuya (ed.) (1995), p. 58. A more detailed account of the legendary history of Hasedera Kannon appears in the *Sanbōe* by Minamoto no Tamenori (fl. 1011), written in 984, fasc. 3, pp. 189–91. Miraculous stories also exist concerning the ridgepole of the roof of the Sanjūsangendō temple in Kyōto. The tree used for the ridgepole was revered as a manifestation of Kannon, the main deity of the temple; but before it was used as construction material, one of its roots penetrated an abandoned skull in the forest causing a terrible headache to the retired emperor. On these narratives, see Tanaka Takako (2000), pp. 64–73.

also be interpreted as saying that the compassionate Kannon has as her substance a violent and dangerous force. In fact, later medieval developments emphasised the fact that buddhas and bodhisattvas intervene directly and violently in this world to punish their enemies.[34]

Kami as Dharma-protectors

A slightly different type of amalgamation developed in the context of the cult of Hachiman (or Yahata).[35] On the special character of this cult more will be said below; for now, suffice it to note that it had an early centre at Usa in Buzen province, in the north-east of Kyushu, and that it was influenced by Buddhism from a very early date. As noted above, several temples were built here already in the seventh century; in 725, these were merged into a single shrine temple, the Mirokuji. One of the main rituals performed at Usa was the *hōjōe*, the releasing of caught animals, allegedly instituted to atone for the blood spilt during a 720 war between the Yamato court and the Hayato tribes of southern Kyushu. This Buddhist ritual was one of many ways to raise merit, which could then be transferred to serve various ends.

Usa Hachiman appears in court documents for the first time in 737, and rose to prominence within a decade, in what must have been one of the most spectacular coups in shrine history. In 741, the shrine (or perhaps its temple, the Mirokuji) received a court donation of sutras, Buddhist novices and a pagoda in thanks for its assistance in quelling yet another rebellion. Around the same time Emperor Shōmu started work on a large image of Vairocana, an engineering feat for which copper and expertise from the Buzen region were essential. In 747, when this project encountered difficulties, Hachiman presented the court with an oracle in which he promised to "lead the kami of heaven and earth to ensure the safe completion [of the image]": "I shall make the molten copper [as easy to handle] as water and melt my body with the straw, timber and earth, so that there will be no impediment."[36] In 749 the image was successfully completed; a month later, a "priest-nun" (*negi-ni*) and an attendant priest (*kannushi*) from Usa accompanied Hachiman and his consort Himegami from Kyushu to the capital, where they were present at the eye-opening ceremony of the image. The two deities were rewarded with the first and second court ranks, and in 781 Hachiman was furthermore granted the title of "Great Bodhisattva of state-protecting, miraculous, majestic, divine power." The Hachiman cult, and especially the intriguing nature of Hachiman's oracles, is discussed in more detail in Allan Grapard's chapter in this volume.

34 See Satō Hiroo's chapter in this book; also Satō (2000), Rambelli (2002).
35 See Naumann (1994), pp. 198ff.; Nakano Hatayoshi (1985).
36 *Hachiman Usa-gū gotakusenshū*, ST vol. Usa, p. 79.

The Hachiman cult clearly represents a model of amalgamation that went far beyond that of, for example, Tado.[37] Rather than as a sentient being in need of Buddhist salvation, Hachiman acted as a powerful protector of the Dharma. As such, he was more similar to the devas "inside" Buddhism than to those local kami who had vowed to protect Buddhism from the "outside." This different character of Hachiman was also reflected in the rituals performed at Hachiman shrines. At shrine temples, monks would read sutras at the temple and transferred the merit thus acquired to the shrine;[38] but at Hachiman, the shrine itself was led by a "priest-nun" (who was higher in rank than the shrine priests), and sutras were read directly in front of the kami. Moreover, Hachiman himself was represented in the guise of a Buddhist monk. This broke radically with traditional kami practice, where the presence of the deity was indicated by a "seat" in the form of a rock, a pillar, a tree, or another "kami object." It was inspired directly by the statues of Buddhist divinities worshipped at temples.

Tutelary shrines to the Dharma-protector Hachiman were erected at large temples such as Tōdaiji, Yakushiji, Tōji, and Daianji in the course of the early ninth century. Here, Hachiman served as the protector of the temple grounds and the monastic community that lived and practised there, alongside more traditional, Buddhist protective divinities such as the four Deva Kings and the five Wisdom Kings. The result was that whereas before, temples had been built at shrines, now shrines were built at temples too. In this way, the merging of kami cults and Buddhism was institutionalised in yet another way: now, there were both shrine temples and temple shrines.

A particularly striking example of a temple-shrine complex is the Hie shrines at the Tendai headquarters on Mount Hiei.[39] Before the founding of the Tendai school by Saichō (767–822), this mountain was a cult site for the kami Ōmiwa Myōjin and Ōyamatsumi, and a shrine temple dedicated to these deities already existed there. When Saichō built Enryakuji on Mount Hiei, he adopted these kami as tutelary deities of the monastic community on this mountain under the name of Hie Sannō ("the Mountain King of Hie"), after the example of the Chinese Tiantai head-temple, the Guoqingsi, and its tutelary Mountain King. A generation later, in 887, Enchin (814–91) gained

37 Yoshida Kazuhiko, however, argues against the understanding that these two notions (of kami as beings in need of salvation, and kami as Dharma-protectors) belonged to two different "systems." He points out that both emerge in the sources more or less simultaneously, and that tales drawing on both these notions can be found side by side, e.g. in the *Nihon ryōiki*. Yoshida (1996), pp. 246–7.

38 An example is the court's reaction to an epidemic in 834: all temples in the capital were ordered to recite (*tendoku*) the *Daihannya-kyō* and the *Kongō hannya-kyō* "for the kami of heaven and earth" in order to "exorcise the unpropitious *qi*" (*Shoku Nihon kōki*, entry for Jōwa 1 (834)/4/26). On the use of the *Daihannya-kyō* in exorcistic rites in Japan, see Tachibana Kyōdō (1984). On the reading of sutras for the benefit of kami, see Kumagaya Mochitaka (1987).

39 Sugahara Shinkai (1992).

permission from the court to ordain two "annual ordinands" (i.e. two novices a year) who were specifically dedicated to the two deities of Hie Sannō.[40] One of these was to specialise in reading the *Daibirushana-kyō* for the kami of Ōbie (Ōmiwa Myōjin); the other was to read the *Ichijichōrinnō-kyō* for the kami of Obie (Ōyamatsumi).

In fact, the practice of ordaining monks for the service of kami had originated already before this time; the Tendai school itself had received two annual ordinands dedicated to the kami of Kamo and Kasuga since 859. Even before that, the court had ordained seventy monks with the specific task of reciting sutras for the same number of "kami of prime importance" (*myōjin*) in 850, and seven monks had been ordained to recite sutras for the three kami of Aso as early as 794.[41] In the same spirit, it became customary to donate sutra scrolls, buddha images and even Buddhist relics to prominent shrines, for example after the enthronement of a new emperor. Through all these various means, the court institutionalised the practice of "improving" the character of important kami by means of Buddhist ritual.

Kami as traces of Buddhist divinities

The next and final phase in the process of amalgamation is thought to have begun with the definition of kami as "traces" (*suijaku*) or local emanations of Buddhist divinities. In other words, Buddhist divinities were defined as the "original ground" (*honji*) from which the powers of the kami derived.

The terminology here is of Chinese, and more specifically, Tiantai origin.[42] The terms "original" and "trace" (respectively, Ch. *ben* and *ji*, and J. *hon* and *shaku* = *jaku*) were first introduced into Buddhist discourse by disciples of Kumārajīva in the early fifth century, and later refined into a key analytical tool by the Tiantai patriarch Zhiyi (538–97). In his commentaries on the *Lotus Sutra*, Zhiyi distinguished between the historical Buddha and the eternal principle of Buddhahood; he applied the term "trace" to the former, and "original" to the latter. He defined the first fourteen chapters of the *Lotus Sutra* as the provisional "trace-teaching" of the historical Buddha, and the final fourteen as the ultimate "original teaching" of the eternal Buddha. Zhiyi's primary use of the concepts of origin and trace was to systematise the various Buddhist teachings into a single, all-embracing scheme

40 Ibid., pp. 55–8.

41 The seventy monks are mentioned in *Buntoku jitsuroku*, entry for Kashō 3 (850)/5/9, and the seven monks in *Ruijū kokushi*, entry for Enryaku 13 (794)/3 (SZKT, vols 5–6). See Nakai Masataka (1991).

42 On the Chinese roots of these terms, see Alicia Matsunaga (1969), ch. 3. Zhiyi expressed these views in his *Miaofa lianhuajing xuanyi*, T 33, pp. 681–814; on *hon* and *jaku*, see esp. pp. 764b–5a. For a partial translation of this text (but not the passage on *hon* and *jaku*), see Paul Swanson (1989).

(Ch. *panjiao*).[43] By defining some teachings as "traces," and ascribing to them the function of preparing those with lesser capabilities for the "original" teaching, he found a way to resolve contradictions between scriptures. He argued that the true essence of all teachings and practices – and, in the final analysis, of all phenomena – is disclosed in the original teaching of the *Lotus Sutra*, where the "origin," the timeless "principle" of supreme enlightenment itself, addresses us directly. All else must be seen as traces of this principle, distinguishable from it, but at the same time "mysteriously one" with it because they emanate from this origin, and serve to lead us to it.

These terms, then, became prominent in Japan with the establishment of the Tendai school in the first decades of the ninth century, as a part of *Lotus Sutra* doctrine.[44] Their application to local deities, however, would appear to be a specifically Japanese development.

According to Tsuji Zennosuke, the first time the term *suijaku* appears in the sources with reference to the kami is in a document relating to the annual ordinands of Enryakuji specialised in reading sutras for the kami of Kamo and Kasuga, as mentioned above.[45] To argue for the appointment of these ordinands, the Enryakuji prelate Eryō (791–859) is reported to have said:

> The Supreme Buddha gives guidance sometimes in his real (*jitsu*) aspect, and sometimes in an expedient (*gon*) aspect. The Great Teacher and his traces (*suijaku*) are sometimes kings, and sometimes kami. Therefore, sage kings always rely on the invisible power of the kami (*shinmei*) in order to rule their country. The kami (*jindō*) cut through troubles solely by relying on the sword of wisdom that subdues and controls [evil].

Here, the term *suijaku* is used with reference to the kami in general, and perhaps Kamo and Kasuga in particular. The kami are identified as traces or "expedient aspects" of the Buddha, and therefore worthy of annual ordinands.

After this, the first known usage of the term *suijaku* with reference to kami dates from 937, when it appears in a document issued at Dazaifu in northern

43 On *panjiao*, see Lopez (ed.) (1988).

44 The concepts of *hon* and *jaku* made inroads also into Shingon doctrine. They occur, for example, in *Darijing shu*, a commentary on the *Mahāvairocana sūtra* by Yixing (683–727), the sixth patriarch of Shingon. Yixing explains the relationship between the buddhas on the central dais of the womb mandala and the deities in the rest of the mandala in terms of *hon* and *jaku* (T 39, p. 610b). This may have something to do with the fact that Yixing had been a student of Tiantai before he became a disciple of Shanwuwei. However that may be, *hon* and *jaku* never became as central to Shingon discourse as they were to Tendai. Finally, it should be mentioned that *hon* and *jaku* can also occasionally be found in writings of Japanese Sanron and Hossō monks of the Nara period (see Nishida Nagao (1978), p. 162), in relation to the various bodies of the Buddha.

45 *Nihon sandai jitsuroku*, in SZKT 1, p. 37. Tsuji Zennosuke (1955), pp. 102–3.

Kyushu.[46] This document concerns the building of a pagoda at the shrine temple of Hakozaki Hachimangū shrine, not far from Dazaifu. The purpose of this pagoda was to accommodate a set of sutras that had originally been promised by Saichō to the Mirokuji at Usa. To establish that the Hakozaki shrine temple was the right place for this pagoda, the document argues that "although this [Hakozaki] shrine and that [Usa] shrine are located in different places, both are identical as avatars (*gongen*), bodhisattvas, or traces (*suijaku*)." Here Hachiman, the main deity of both the Hakozaki and the Usa shrine, is described not only as a bodhisattva, but also as a trace and an avatar – but we are not told of whom or of what exactly.

We have to wait another twenty-five years before encountering a more concrete hint at the identity of Hachiman's "original ground." In a document from 962, explaining the origin of the tutelary Hachiman shrine at Daianji (*Daianji Hachimangū engi*), it is explained that when the monk Gyōkyō prayed at the Usa shrine, an Amida triad appeared on his sleeve.[47] It is tempting to interpret this to mean that Amida was at this time thought to be Hachiman's Buddhist original. However, a document from 1046 says of Hachiman: "The original source of his enlightenment (*hongaku*) is mysterious and dark (*yūgen*) . . . The Way that benefits the sentient beings manifests the trace [of Hachiman], and the Gate of compassion produces his body; is he then an hypostasis of Śākyamuni, or an embodiment of Kannon?"[48] Thus it would seem that even in the mid-eleventh century, the Buddhist originals of the kami were still fluid and ill-defined, although the notion that *kami* are emanations of Buddhist compassion was becoming well entrenched.

By far the most common Buddhist divinities to be chosen as kami originals were various forms of Kannon, Yakushi, Amida (Skt. Amitāyus), and Śākyamuni; more rarely one encounters also Miroku (Maitreya), Jizō (Kṣitigarbha), and others. It is striking that in most cases, these originals were not the same as the Buddhist divinities installed in existing shrine temples.[49] Specific identifications could of course not be based on scriptural sources, since no such sources existed; instead, they were attributed to authoritative figures of proven spiritual power (usually well-known ascetic ritualists), to whom the kami or buddha in question was said to have revealed itself in a dream or an apparition. Such tales usually formed part of *engi*, founding legends of shrines and temples, which had as their primary aim to enhance or redefine the sacredness of these places as cultic sites.

After a long period of experimentation, the originals of most major kami seem to have become more or less standardised in the course of the twelfth

46 Tsuji (1955), pp. 121–2.

47 This explanation of the process of identifying *honji* draws on Yoshihara Hiroto (1994), pp. 104–5.

48 *Minamoto Yoritomo kōmon*, quoted in Yoshihara (1994). A *kōmon* is a prayer read in front of a deity, stating one's wishes in advance of the ritual performance.

49 Sagai Tatsuru provides an overview in Sagai *et al*. (1992), pp. 94–5.

and thirteenth centuries. A telling example of the extent of *honji suijaku* amalgamation is the construction in 1175 of a "shrine for the assembled kami" (*sōsha*) at the large temple of Rengeō-in, founded by the Retired Emperor Go-Shirakawa few years earlier.[50] This *sōsha* was to contain the spirits of twenty-one of the twenty-two court shrines (that is, all except Ise), as well as a number of other prominent shrines.[51] The kami of these shrines were represented by mirrors; in addition, all were accompanied by images of their "original grounds" (*honji*) or "true bodies" (*mishōtai*) – with the exception of Atsuta and Hinokuma, whose originals were "not documented."

The practice of representing kami through images of their Buddhist originals spread in the course of the Kamakura period, and remained common into the Edo period. The Buddhist originals of kami were carved on the back of the mirrors that represented their spirits, and round or fan-shaped metal objects portraying the kami's Buddhist originals (known as *kakebotoke* or "hanging buddhas") were displayed at shrines. Also, shrines were depicted as mandalas, in which the originals of the shrine's kami were indicated in the form of small images or symbols, or where the shrine compounds were pictured as Buddhist Pure Lands.[52]

As an important reason for the rapid spread of such identifications, Japanese scholars point to the idea that Japan had in 1052 entered the "Final Age of the Dharma" (*mappō*), the age in which the Buddhist Dharma was believed to have degenerated beyond hope. *Yōtenki* (early twelfth century), a Tendai text that identifies the kami of Hie as emanations of Śākyamuni, refers explicitly to the adverse circumstances in Japan as a reason for Buddhist divinities to appear as kami. Japan, the text argues, is a tiny country in the outermost periphery of the Buddhist universe, populated by "people with little talent and goodness"; therefore, Śākyamuni has no other choice but to appear on Mount Hiei in the form of a kami, "to reward the faithful and punish those without faith, and to fulfil wishes for this life and the next."[53]

Also in Tendai circles, kami worship was at some time in the course of the thirteenth century given a scriptural basis in the form of an apocryphal passage, supposedly quoted from the *Hikekyō* (*Karuṇāpuṇḍarīka sūtra*), but not actually contained in that scripture. According to this passage, Śākyamuni himself announced that he would manifest himself after his extinction

50 *Hyakurenshō*, entry for Angen 1 (1175)/6/16. See Okada Shōji (1993).

51 The system of court offerings to twenty-two shrines developed between 966 (when a list of sixteen shrines was drawn up) and 1039 (when the number reached twenty-two). Most of these shrines had clear links with the imperial and Fujiwara lineages; all were deemed central to court rituals for the protection of the state. With the exception of Ise, all these shrines were "shrine-temple multiplexes." On the central importance of the system of twenty-two shrines for the history of court ritual in general and Shinto in particular, see Grapard (1988).

52 See Elizabeth ten Grotenhuis (1999), esp. chs 7 and 8.

53 ST, vol. Hie, p. 81; Sueki Fumihiko (1993), p. 354.

as a kami in order to save beings living in the Final Age of the Dharma: "After my extinction, during the Final Age of the Dharma I will appear as a great kami (*daimyōjin*) and widely save sentient beings."[54] A variant of this story was attributed to the *Nehangyō* (*Nirvāṇa sūtra*): "At that time, the Tathāgata thrust his hand out of the coffin, called Ananda, and told him secretly: 'Don't cry, don't be sad! I will be reborn again in Jambudvīpa; I will appear as a *daimyōjin* and save sentient beings everywhere'."[55]

With the establishment of the *honji suijaku* paradigm, the relationship between kami and buddhas became a theme for theological reflection. The *Shintōshū* (a fourteenth-century collection of shrine legends) writes:

> When we look at the originals (*honji*) of kami (*shinmei jindō*), [we find that] they are various bodhisattvas; traces and transformations of various bodhisattvas is what the kami are . . . Buddhas and *kami* are the same; they are synonyms (*imyō*) like *gan* and *moku* [two different characters both meaning "eye"].[56]

Therefore, continues the text, "Even though buddhas and *kami*, originals and traces are different from each other, their heart/mind is one and the same. The merit acquired in making a pilgrimage to a sacred place of the traces or of buddhas and bodhisattvas is the same."[57] This explanation of the essential identity of kami and buddhas is particularly interesting because it points directly to linguistic and semiotic mechanisms that were used to envision and define the divinities, as we shall see in more detail later.

Since the Kamakura period, kami who are traces of buddhas and bodhisattvas (*suijakujin*, literally "trace-kami") were called "provisionally manifested kami" (*gonshajin*) in works such as *Shintōshū*, *Yōtenki*, *Shojin honkaishō*, and others. They were defined as "separate bodies," splinters, as it were, of the deities of the major shrines in the Kinai region, such as Hie, Kumano, Kasuga, and Iwashimizu Hachimangū, and brought to the villages all over Japan where they were worshipped as tutelary deities (*chinjushin* or *shugojin*).

These same texts explained that buddhas and bodhisattvas, in order to better save sentient beings, "dimmed their radiance and became identical to the dust [of the profane world]" (*wakō dōjin*) – a process of manifestation that was the first step in the establishment of a karmic relation with a Buddhist

54 On the significance of this passage and the development of the noun *daimyōjin* to refer to the kami, see Imahori (1990), esp. pp. 155–92.

55 *Ichidai goji keizu*, attributed to Nichiren, *in Shōwa teihon Nichiren Shōnin ibun*, vol. 3, pp. 2430–1.

56 ST, vol. *Shintōshū*, p. 5. The two different characters mentioned in this passage, *gan* and *moku*, have roughly the same meaning ("eye"), but the former is more detailed and complicated than the latter, which is thus more direct.

57 *Shintōshū*, "Shintō yurai no koto" (quoted in Imahori (1990), pp. 71–2), ST, vol. *Shintōshū*, p. 15.

divinity (*kechien*).[58] The term *wakō dōjin* derives originally from *Laozi* (ch. 4), but was adopted by Chinese Buddhists to express the manifestation of buddhas and bodhisattvas in various guises in our world of delusion, in order to give guidance to the sentient beings. In medieval Japan, the concepts of *honji suijaku* and *wakō dōjin* were inextricably linked. The *Shintōshū* explains:

> Sentient beings living in the corrupt world of the Final Age of the Dharma are not afraid of karmic retribution in their next life; their only concern is glory in this life, and for that purpose only do they visit Buddhist temples and perform rituals to the kami. They only believe what they see with their own eyes, and they are not concerned with the afterlife. For the benefit of such people [buddhas and bodhisattvas] dim the radiance of their original mind and transform into the dust [i.e. coarse material bodies] of various different beings.[59]

Mujū Ichien's *Shasekishū* (1279–83) writes: "In our country, the buddhas at first dimmed their radiance and manifested their traces as a skillful means to soften the violent hearts of the people."[60] In other words: buddhas and bodhisattvas are too lofty and difficult to understand for the unruly and uncivilised inhabitants of the Japanese archipelago, a little realm lost in the ocean east of Jambudvīpa far away from India, the centre of sacredness and enlightenment.[61] Therefore, they had to reduce their spiritual character (i.e. "dim their radiance") and increase their material, physical aspect ("become one with the dust of the profane world"), in a process of materialisation that paralleled contemporary cosmogonic accounts of the creation of the universe.

The manifestation of buddhas in Japan was described as a descent, as indicated by the character *sui* in *suijaku*, also read *taru*, meaning "to hang down, to lower, to trickle down," but also "to confer or bestow upon." In other words, the Indian "originals" were considered to abide on a higher, original ground (*honji*, precisely); they bestowed their grace upon the sentient beings by imprinting their traces in the profane world. The distinction between these deities and their original buddhas was merely due to the epistemological attitudes of their interpreters. As a medieval text puts it, "before deluded people they appear as kami; before enlightened people they appear as buddhas. Being originally one and the same, the distinction between kami and buddhas depends exclusively on the difference between delusion and enlightenment."[62]

58 *Shishū hyaku innen shū*, DNBZ 142, pp. 158–9.
59 *Shintōshū*, ST, vol. *Shintōshū*, p. 7.
60 NKBT 85, p. 61.
61 Ibid., p. 67.
62 *Kami honji no koto*, quoted in Imahori Taitsu (1990), p. 26.

The status of originals and traces was actually more complicated than this, as we shall see below. What is important to notice here is that buddhas were not superior, ontologically or in any other way, to their traces (the kami); the kami were not merely ghost-like apparitions, mere images, but concrete entities that operated in effective ways for the salvation of the people in Japan.

Two parallel developments that complicated the amalgamation process

The development in four steps from "buddhas as foreign kami" in the pre-Nara period, to "kami as traces of buddhas" in the late Heian period forms the backbone of descriptions of the interaction between kami and Buddhism in Japanese history. The picture is complicated, however, by two developments that occurred in parallel with this amalgamation process. The first is described as the "isolation of kami from Buddhism" (*shinbutsu kakuri*); the second is the co-existence of kami cults and Buddhism with other ritual traditions, notably Yin-Yang (*onmyōdō*) and cults of numinous entities that were neither kami nor Buddhist divinities, such as "angry spirits" (*goryō*) and other kinds of deities of various origin.

Isolation of kami from Buddhism

At the same time that some kami were increasingly integrated in the Buddhist realm, other kami (or, in some cases, even the same kami) were also held separate from Buddhism in increasingly systematic ways. As pointed out already by Fujii Sadafumi (1955), kami cults and Buddhism were "mixed" or combined, but not assimilated. Even though popular practice combined the worship of kami and buddhas into a single "common religion" (to borrow an expression from Ian Reader and George Tanabe, 1998), kami and buddhas continued to exist as two parallel entities that were clearly distinguished in various ways.[63] Even at Iwashimizu Hachimangū, some rites were defined as kami rites, and others as Buddhist; the former were conducted by lay magistrates or kami priests, and the latter by monks.[64] This fact alone indicates that the forces of combination were offset by a stubborn tendency to isolate the kami from Buddhism, and never reached the level of complete assimilation.

Historically, friction between kami cults and Buddhism can be traced back as far as the account in *Nihon shoki* of the first introduction of Buddhism to Japan in the sixth century.[65] Also later, the National Histories and other sources abound in reports on the wrath of kami at the infringement of

63 Fujii (1955), p. 2.

64 Fujii (1955), p. 2. On isolation at Usa and elsewhere, see Okada Shōji (1998), pp. 43–7.

65 This overview is based on Okada Shigekiyo (1982), pp. 419ff.

Buddhist temples on their territories, some of which we have mentioned above.[66] At Ise, especially, the shrine temple that had existed there since an unknown date was moved twice, in 772 and 780, because the kami of Ise caused incessant rainstorms in their wrath at its proximity to the shrines; after 780, no more mention is made of an Ise shrine temple, so perhaps the temple was not so much moved as dismantled at this time. The shrines' *Gishikichō* from 804 stipulate that on Ise lands taboo words must be used to refer to Buddhist terms such as buddha, sutra, pagoda, monk, lay practitioner (*ubasoku*), temple, and vegetarian food,[67] and in 816 the Ōnakatomi head priest of the Ise shrines was punished for having caused divine wrath by "performing both kami and Buddhist rites in parallel."[68] Here, we gauge for the first time the development of a conscious policy of isolating kami ritual from Buddhism.

In the late ninth century, this practice seems to have spread from Ise to other imperial shrines and rituals. The *Jōgan shiki* (871) banned the performance of Buddhist rites at all court offices as well as all provincial offices of the Kinai region for the duration of the *daijōe*, the imperial enthronement ceremony. Also, monks and nuns were forbidden from entering the palace during the period of abstinence before, during and after a range of other kami rituals at the court.[69] In the *Engi shiki* (927), too, it is stipulated that "at all times, during the days of partial abstinence before and after the festivals of *toshigoi*, Kamo, *tsukinami, kanname* and *niiname*, monks and nuns . . . may not enter the Imperial Palace."[70] During the latter half of the Heian period, the notion that Buddhism should be tabooed on days of kami ritual became an established principle, and its many practical consequences can be traced in considerable detail in the diaries of Heian aristocrats.[71] The taboo and many of its detailed implications were transmitted throughout the medieval period, to be reinstituted with renewed force in the Edo period.

As pointed out by Kuroda Toshio, the taboo against Buddhist signs (specific words, gestures, priestly robes, etc.) at Ise and other places "did not represent a simple rejection of Buddhism as an antagonistic and heterogeneous external reality" even during the medieval period.[72] For example, in his Ise

66 To mention just one later example, when Saidaiji was shaken by an earthquake in 772, this was found to be caused by a kami from Ōmi province, who was angry at the cutting of timber there for the building of a pagoda at Saidaiji. *Shoku Nihongi*, entry for Hōki 3 (772)/4.

67 GR 1, p. 3.

68 *Ruijū kokushi* 19, entry for Kōnin 7 (816)/6 (SZKT, vols 5–6).

69 F. G. Bock (1970–2), p. 117.

70 Also, "at no time may any Buddhist monk or any butcher live unlawfully on the southern side of Kamo no Mioya shrine, even if it is outside the perimeter." F. G. Bock (1970–2), pp. 117–18.

71 See Satō Mahito (1990) for a detailed analysis.

72 Kuroda (1996c), p. 367.

diary *Daijingū sankeiki* (1286) the monk Tsūkai stated that "in her divine will, [the kami of Ise] does not really loathe Buddhism." Tsūkai explained Amaterasu's attitude as one of "inwardly taking refuge in Buddhism, and at the same time outwardly banning it."[73] Another monk with a keen interest in Ise, Mujū Ichien, further expanded on the subject in his *Shasekishū*: "Outwardly the [Ise] deity is estranged from the Dharma, but inwardly she profoundly supports the Three Treasures [of Buddhism]. Thus, Japanese Buddhism is under the special protection of the deity of the Great Shrine."[74] Even though some monks (Tsūkai among them) argued that the tabooing of Buddhism was irreconcilable with Buddhist (i.e. *honji suijaku*) doctrine, the taboo remained in place, and was applied ever more widely over time.

The original reason for this taboo on Buddhism does not appear to have lain in an association of Buddhism with the impurity of death. As Okada Shigekiyo has pointed out, direct contact with death (as well as blood, for example due to menstruation) was tabooed also at temples, and conversely, Buddhism was *not* tabooed at the majority of shrines.[75] The tabooing of Buddhism was a ritual practice that originated in the context of imperial ritual, and was maintained most strictly in relation to imperial ceremonies such as those at Ise and Kamo (both led by a "consecrated imperial princess") and the enthronement ceremony; from there, it spread to other official ceremonial occasions. Takatori Masao has argued that this practice was a reaction against the intrusion of Buddhist monks into politics, which reached a peak with the so-called Dōkyō incident of 768, when Empress Shōtoku tried to pass on the throne to the monk Dōkyō.[76] It would seem, then, that the isolation of imperial kami ritual from Buddhism was informed by the need to bolster the principle of hereditary imperial and aristocratic rule, based on mythical and ritual kami precedent, and to protect it from being weakened by the interference of Buddhist ideas.

Although the scope of this practice was limited, its repercussions were significant. The isolation of kami ritual prevented it from being absorbed by Buddhism, even when Buddhism was at its most dominant. Also, the taboo on Buddhism at central shrines such as Ise and Kamo created a theological tension between these two ritual discourses that proved an extremely fertile source of speculation on the nature of the kami.

Diversification of the divine realm

Murayama Shūichi has pointed out that the process of kami-Buddhist amalgamation was both complicated and aided by the involvement of other ritual

73 *Daijingū sōsho* vol. *Jingū sanpaiki taisei*, p. 53.
74 *Shasekishū*, in NKBT 85, p. 59; Morrell (1985), p. 73.
75 Okada Shigekiyo (1982), pp. 423–9.
76 Takatori Masao (1979), pp. 37–63. See also Ross Bender (1979).

traditions of Chinese origin.[77] In particular, he stresses that ideas and practices of Yin-Yang and Daoist origin served as a bridge between kami ritual and Buddhism, and facilitated their integration.

There are many signs that Yin-Yang rituals had a profound influence on kami cults from an early date. Many of the court rituals supervised by the Ministry of Kami Affairs (Jingikan) were patterned after Chinese court ceremonial, and incorporated Yin-Yang or Daoist elements.[78] In the *ritsuryō* bureaucracy, divination to identify the causes and effects of inauspicious incidents was performed in parallel by the Yin-Yang division of the "Bureau of Yin and Yang" (Onmyōryō) and the Ministry of Kami Affairs. While their methods were different, their function was similar, and it appears that the Yin-Yang division of the Bureau of Yin and Yang performed a subordinate, supplementary role under the Ministry of Kami Affairs. On the other hand, some of the more Yin-Yang type rituals on the calendar of the Ministry of Kami Affairs were in the mid-Heian period taken over by the Bureau of Yin and Yang.[79] In the same period, Yin-Yang ritualists (*onmyōji*) adopted kami practices such as recitation of the Nakatomi purification formula, while kami priests began to use Yin-Yang phrases and techniques.[80]

Already in China, Daoist and Yin-Yang elements had become an important part of esoteric Buddhist practice. In Japan, these elements increased markedly in popularity in the course of the Heian period. Examples are the development of rituals of offering to stars and planets (notably the Pole Star, the Big Dipper, and the "morning star" Venus), and to the so-called "Magistrates of the Realm of the Dead" (*myōkan*). The former was among the first Buddhist practices introduced to Japan; the latter can be traced back to the early ninth century.[81] It is significant that such elements were most prominent in the practice of mountain ascetics, who played an important role in the amalgamation of kami and Buddhism from its very earliest stages. Also, it is important to note that such practices spread quickly to all layers of the population: as early as 796, popular worship of the Pole Star was forbidden by imperial decree for the reason that it involved "mingling of men and women," and therefore caused ritual impurity.[82]

The stars and divine magistrates that served as the foci of such various Daoist-like rituals were neither kami in the traditional sense of the word, nor were they fully integrated into the Buddhist pantheon. They formed a moot

77 Murayama Shūichi (1974), pp. 370–4.

78 See e.g. Naumann (2000).

79 The Jingikan ceremony of *yasoshima* was taken over by the Onmyōryō, and *ōharae* and *michiae* were discontinued and exchanged for ceremonies of similar import under the supervision of the Onmyōryō. See Kosaka Shinji (1977).

80 Teeuwen and van der Veere (1998), pp. 56–60, and (1999), pp. 210–15.

81 See Hayami Tasuku (1975), chs 1 and 3.

82 This prohibition was renewed in 799. *Nihon kōki*, entries for Enryaku 15 (796)/3 and 18 (799)/9. See Satō Torao (1943), p. 70.

category of numinous powers that was approached from both kami and Buddhist angles. The Chinese cult of the Pole Star, for example, left its mark on imperial kami rituals such as the *daijōsai* enthronement ceremony and the worship of the imperial clan deity at Ise;[83] at the same time worship of the Pole Star gathered popularity at court in the Buddhist guise of such esoteric rituals as the *hokuto hō* and the *sonshōō hō*, and in addition this same star was worshipped in Yin-Yang ceremonies led by Yin-Yang ritualists. The existence of such "moot" divinities, and of ritual traditions that were neither native nor Buddhist, was grasped upon by shrine priests as a way to develop new forms of kami cults from the Insei period (1086–92) onwards. Mark Teeuwen's essay in this volume discusses a good example of this, namely the emergence of a *honji suijaku* cult of Amaterasu, created by Ise priests, that is of a decidedly "moot" character in exactly this sense of the word.

Apart from spirits and deities of Yin-Yang and Daoist origin, there were also other moot supernatural entities that required ritual action, and that played a role in the ritual arsenal of the court and the people. One might argue that Hachiman himself was one such entity. The cult of Hachiman displayed many unique features from an early date. It appears, for example, that Hachiman was identified with Emperor Ōjin (who reigned late fourth to early fifth century) already in the early eighth century, and it has been pointed out that Hachiman was perhaps the first kami to be identified as the spirit of an actual person.[84] As a thoroughly personified deity, Hachiman was radically different from the more elusive spirits that were the typical foci of kami cults, and could therefore also perhaps be identified more easily as a sentient being in need of salvation, or as a bodhisattva on the road to salvation. Moreover, Hachiman was highly atypical among prominent kami in the sense that he did not figure in the myths about the Age of the Gods in *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*, and also in the sense that he was worshipped by the court without being identified as a clan ancestor. All these circumstances facilitated the application of Buddhist doctrine and ritual to this deity, and also made it easier for the Fujiwara to use his cult to force through change – namely to back up their political coup of enthroning a Fujiwara emperor (Seiwa).

The fact that Hachiman was not a typical kami became all the more clear precisely in the context of that coup, which involved the building of a Hachiman shrine near the capital in order to protect Emperor Seiwa, and thus to strengthen the Fujiwara's grip on the throne. The Fujiwara's main "accomplice" in carrying through this spectacular ritual move was the Shingon monk Gyōkyō of Daianji. In 859, when Gyōkyō was at the Usa Hachiman shrine to pray for the young emperor, he received an oracle from Hachiman, in which the deity asked to be moved nearer the capital. In accordance with this oracle, Hachiman was enshrined at the temple of Gyōkyō's clan (the Ki) on

83 On the Pole Star, Ise and the *daijōsai*, see Yoshino Hiroko (2000).

84 Takahashi Miyuki (1993), pp. 86–8.

Mount Otokoyama, not far south of the capital, in 861. This temple, called Iwashimizudera, was now renamed Iwashimizu Hachimangū Gokokuji, or "state-protecting temple of the Hachiman shrine at Iwashimizu." All these developments are addressed in detail in Grapard's chapter in this book.

The most striking aspect of the whole affair is the fact that Hachiman was moved to a temple by an esoteric monk. Kami had been moved to new capitals before – the Fujiwara clan deities, for example, were worshipped in the capitals of Nara (Kasuga shrine), Nagaoka (Ōharano shrine) and Kyoto (Yoshida shrine); but in all these cases, shrines were built to accommodate the deities, and shrine priests were appointed to serve them. When Hachiman was moved to Iwashimizudera, however, a new kind of institution emerged which was both shrine and temple at the same time. This kind of institution was termed *miyadera*, translatable, perhaps, as "kami temple."

Miyadera were temples, founded and administrated by Buddhist monks, where the main object of worship was a kami.[85] They differed from shrine temples (such as, for example, the Tado Jingūji and the Mirokuji) in that there was no established priestly clan conducting its own kami rituals at a separate shrine. They also differed from temples, in that the monks of *miyadera*, known as *shasō* or "shrine monks," could marry and pass their positions on to their sons. Although they were run by monks, *miyadera* also had kami priests (*negi*, *kannushi*), but these were of subordinate rank, and had minor functions even in the rituals; only the *shasō*, for example, were allowed to enter the inner sanctuary of the temple.

Miyadera were not placed under the control of the Ministry of Kami Affairs, and were not included in the list of shrines that received court offerings (in *Engi shiki*, 927). However, half a century later, when the classical system of national court offerings detailed in *Engi shiki* was abandoned and exchanged for a much less ambitious programme of court offerings to only sixteen (later twenty-two) shrines, the largest *miyadera* (including Iwashimizu) were included in this new list. This once and for all defined them as shrines, and incorporated them in the court system of kami ritual.

In the tenth century, more *miyadera* appeared in the capital as sites for a new type of ritual practice: the pacification of so-called *goryō* or "angry ghosts." Here, again, it must be noted that these ghosts were neither traditional kami, nor part of the Buddhist pantheon, but represented another example of the "moot" category which also Yin-Yang deities and, arguably, Hachiman belonged to. *Goryō* were the ghosts of aristocrats who had been falsely accused of some political crime and had died in disgrace, often in exile. Their spirits were believed to have returned to the capital, where they not only haunted their enemies, but also caused epidemics that struck the entire population. *Goryō* festivals began as a popular practice in the early ninth century. At times of pestilence, local commoners called in monks

85 See Satō Mahito (1995).

to recite sutras to subdue the malevolent spirits that plagued them, and at the same time to pray for a good harvest. These festivals, called *goryōe*, also included a wide range of entertainments (songs, dances, wrestling, horse races, archery and popular theatre), and attracted large crowds. Understandably, the court felt ill at ease with this popular worship of the ghosts of its dead enemies, and tried to suppress or at least control *goryōe*. One way to achieve this was by staging official *goryōe*, while simultaneously prohibiting "private" *goryōe*. In 863, a large, public *goryōe* was staged at the Shinsen'en garden in the imperial palace grounds, with the stated aim of stopping the epidemic that had made countless victims in the previous months.[86] Altars to six notorious *goryō* were erected, monks chanted the *Hannya shingyō* and the *Konkōmyō-kyō*, musicians played court music, sons of prominent courtiers, as well as Chinese and Koreans of no further description, performed dances, and various "miscellaneous entertainments" were staged. The gates of the palace were opened, and commoners flocked to the grounds to enjoy the display. Two years later, in 865, private *goryōe* were banned, but with little effect.[87]

Goryō festivals were performed at a variety of locations, ranging from graveyards (e.g. Murasakino), to temples (Tōji, Saiji) and shrines (the Ima-Kumano shrine at Shirakawa in Kyoto – actually a *miyadera*). By the mid-tenth century, some temples had erected special halls for the performance of *goryōe*, called Goryōdō or Tenjindō. The most famous of these was the Tenjindō of Gion, probably founded in the 920s or 930s. Later, the most famous *goryōe* came to be performed at *miyadera*-type temples such as the Gionsha (which developed from the Gion Tenjindō), and the Kitano Tenmangū.

The Gionsha (renamed Yasaka Jinja in 1871) developed from a temple hall linked to a temple named Gionji or Kankyōji in *c*. 930, to a *miyadera* defined as a subtemple (*betsuin*) of Enryakuji, the Tendai head-temple, by 974.[88] While being a thoroughly Buddhist institution, it was treated by the court as a shrine, and it was included in the list of twenty-two shrines in the early eleventh century. The main deity enshrined here was (at least by the mid-eleventh century) Gozu Tennō or "the Bull-Headed Heavenly King," a deity of unknown origin who was later identified further with the more orthodox Buddhist divinities Yakushi and Jūichimen Kannon on the one hand, and the kami Susanoo on the other. In a variety of sources, it is suggested that Gozu Tennō was a foreign deity of Indian or Korean origin. Whatever his origin, this foreign deity was believed to possess extraordinary magical powers, and to be supremely effective in dispelling and destroying disease-spreading *goryō*.[89]

86 *Sandai jitsuroku* entry for Jōgan 5/5/12.
87 HI, vol. 2, no. 489.
88 For an account of this cult in English, see McMullin (1988).
89 On Gozu Tennō and other gods of disease, see Yamamoto Hiroko (1998b), esp. pp. 503–644.

Kitano Tenmangū was first founded in 947, and became established as a fully fledged *miyadera* by 959.[90] It was staffed by *shasō*, and included in the list of twenty-two shrines from 991 onwards. The deity enshrined here, known as Tenman Tenjin, was a complex combinatory divinity, including the deified "angry ghost" of Sugawara no Michizane (845–903), a kami (Tenjin himself), an Indian deity (his full name, Daijizai Daitenmanjin includes a reference to Daijizaiten, i.e. Śiva), and a bodhisattva, Kannon.[91] Iyanaga Nobumi's chapter in this volume addresses the complexities underlying the divine figure of Tenjin.

The cults of *miyadera* like Gionsha and Kitano Tenmangū introduced yet another prominent category of "moot" deities. These were temples where shrine monks worshipped deities that were difficult to categorise – exotic deities such as Gozu Tennō, and pacified spirits of human beings. When we find that such institutions came to be included in the list of court shrines, it must be noted that it was not at all obvious that they were actually shrines. Their inclusion expanded the category of kami worship with cults of a markedly Buddhist character. One expression of this is the fact that these kami were believed to hold a Buddhist diet, and were never offered fish or fowl. Their worship did not follow the usual patterns of kami ritual, and application of the principle of isolating kami ritual from Buddhism caused all kinds of practical problems. It was, for example, not possible to invite the abbots of these temples to the imperial palace when kami prayers were said, and care needed to be taken to avoid the performance of Buddhist rituals such as *hōjōe* and *goryōe* on the same days as traditional kami rites.

The group of "moot deities" that expanded the ranks of the kami continued to grow in the tenth and eleventh centuries. One category of new deities imported at this time was a number of foreign tutelary deities adopted by prominent Tendai and Shingon temples.[92] At Onjōji, a deity of Korean (Silla) origin by the name of Shinra Myōjin was enshrined as the tutelary deity of the Tendai Jimon lineage at some time before 971 (when this deity was awarded a kami rank). Shinra Myōjin was originally the tutelary deity of Fahuayuan, a Korean monastery in China that was frequently visited by Japanese monks – among them the founder of the Jimon lineage, Enchin (814–91). In response, the rival Sanmon lineage adopted the same tutelary deity, but under the alias of Sekisan Myōjin. A century or so later, and possibly also under the influence of Onjōji, the Shingon temple complex of

90 See Borgen (1994), ch. 8.

91 See Iyanaga Nobumi (1983a). Interestingly, Tenjin also shows more than superficial structural affinities with the previously mentioned legend of the dangerous sacred tree used to make an image of Kannon. Also in this case, a violent and dangerous sacred entity is finally revealed, through the intervention of Buddhism, as a manifestation of the compassionate Kannon.

92 See Guth (1999).

Daigoji installed a female tutelary deity called Seiryū Gongen, adopted from the Qinglongsi in Chang'an.[93]

At the same time, religious institutions as such also became more diverse. While in the Nara period, there were shrines and temples, late Heian sources speak of shrines (*shosha*, including *miyadera*), temples (*shoji*) and mountains (*shosan*).[94] The latter included institutions that had been listed as shrines in the *Engi shiki* in the tenth century, such as Kumano and Kinpusen. Now, they had been transformed into sites for esoteric mountain practice, and had become Japanese manifestations of Buddhist paradises, which were popular pilgrimage destinations for the court aristocracy. As a result, these "mountains" now constituted their own category of cultic sites, still associated with shrines and kami, but completely Buddhist in nature.

Many of the deities enshrined on such mountains were known as *gongen* or "avatars." This term is usually derived from Chinese sutras (such as the *Yulapen jing* and the *Zuishengwang jing*); however, it does not figure there as a noun, but only as a combination of an adverb and a verb, meaning "to take on a temporary appearance," and referring to the ability of buddhas and bodhisattvas to appear in various guises in order to help the sentient beings according to their capacities. In Japan, however, it would seem that *gongen* constituted yet another category of deities, associated with Buddhist centres of mountain practice (*shosan*). The deities of the three Kumano shrines, collectively called the "three Kumano Gongen," may serve as typical examples of this category. According to *engi* legend, these three deities were a king, his son, and a holy man from India, who were so disgusted at the machinations of the one thousand women in the king's harem that they left their Indian kingdom for Japan, and settled at Kumano.[95] *Gongen* of this kind were neither native kami nor divinities from the Buddhist pantheon; rather, they were virtuous beings from foreign lands who had travelled to Japan to bring benefits to its people, and, in particular, to promote the cause of Buddhism. As such, they represent yet another "moot" category of divine beings in Japan.

Still other categories of moot deities could be added: witch animals such as snakes and foxes, demons and ghosts such as the long-nosed *tengu* and phantom-like *mononoke*, deified Buddhist patriarchs and ascetics, and many more. The ways in which all these different kinds of supernatural beings coexisted as parts of a single divine realm are explored in Satō Hiroo's chapter in this volume. The patchwork-like nature of the divine realm of which they

93 Although tradition says that this deity was first imported by Kūkai (774–835) to protect Jingoji, and later transferred to Daigoji at the time of its founding in 874, the first mention of a shrine to Seiryū Gongen is at Daigoji in 1089.

94 Satō Mahito (1995), p. 137.

95 *Shintōshū* (fourteenth century), ST, vol. *Shintōshū*, pp. 31–42, "Kumano Gongen no koto." This source includes many similar tales about other *gongen*.

were a part adds to medieval divinities a complexity that is not acknowledged by the traditional understanding of the *honji suijaku* paradigm, namely as a straightforward coupling of a kami with an appropriate buddha or bodhisattva. More typically, a medieval divinity was a multifaceted entity with many names and many appearances – some Buddhist, some traditional kami, and others stars and planets, historical human beings, foreign deities, witch animals, ghosts or demons. *Honji suijaku*, then, was not a simple mechanism for "buddhifying" kami, but rather an extremely versatile tool for assembling complex divine entities of the greatest possible power.

Summary

The amalgamation between kami and Buddhism can be viewed as a progressive process in which the kami rose steadily in the hierarchical order of Buddhist cosmology: from deluded sentient beings, to Dharma protectors, and finally to local emanations of buddhas and bodhisattvas. When Tsuji first analysed this process, he presented each of the different phases constituting it as another step towards the full buddhification of the kami. In Tsuji's view, each phase transcended the preceding one, and cancelled it out. With the final definition of the kami as Buddhist emanations, therefore, Tsuji regarded the process as complete and closed, and he never pursued its further development during the medieval period.

While there is no denying the progression in this long and slow process, later research into medieval kami cults has revealed that the emergence of the *honji suijaku* paradigm as described by Tsuji by no means erased the tension between kami and Buddhism. Not all kami had become Buddhist; and even those that had seemingly been absorbed into Buddhism retained typical kami features, which in Tsuji's scheme belong to earlier phases of the amalgamation process. As we shall see below, also in the medieval period some kami, and even whole categories of kami, remained dangerously irascible and unpredictable, or even violently anti-Buddhist. This insight forces us to revise our understanding of Tsuji's scheme. Clearly, each phase of the amalgamation process did not invalidate everything that came before; rather, each phase created yet another way to relate kami to Buddhist thought and practice, without changing the basic characteristics of all kami, or fully dissolving the tension between kami and Buddhism.

Looking back on Tsuji's findings with these new insights in mind, Japanese scholars have raised a number of issues that complicate his straightforward evolutionary scheme. Here, we have summarised these issues under the headings of isolation and diversification. Rather than as a one-way development in a Buddhist direction, reaching closure with the complete absorption of the kami into Buddhism, we see kami-Buddhist amalgamation as a more complex and ongoing process that always moved in different directions at the same time. Amalgamation was offset by isolation, and complicated by

diversification. In different historical periods, we find all these forces at work side by side, interfering with each other and creating a power field that inspired people to keep searching for new theological interpretations and ritual uses of the kami.

Honji suijaku ***in the medieval and early modern periods***

As with so many other subjects, research into the further development of the *honji suijaku* paradigm after the period of its initial conception (the late Heian period) is underdeveloped. Combinatory cults of the medieval period constitute perhaps the most prominent black hole in our understanding of the history of Japanese religion, and it is hoped that the chapters in this book, most of which deal with the medieval and early-modern periods, may shed some light on these cults. Here, we will have to limit ourselves to indicating some of the major developments in this field from the fourteenth century onwards.

The category of "real kami"

In the Kamakura period, the idea developed that not all kami are manifestations of buddhas or bodhisattvas, and that some deities lack a Buddhist original. These particular kami were called "real demonic deities" (*jitsurui kijin*) or "real kami" (*jisshashin*). In this case, the attribute "real" refers to the fact that these deities were not emanations or transformations of buddhas or bodhisattvas; they were autonomous beings in and of themselves. Texts present these deities as malevolent entities, and identify them with local, primitive "cursing kami" (*tatarigami*), or with the spirits of the dead. Religious institutions presented their own "trace-kami" as superior to the local, pre-existing deities, whom they described as evil and dangerous. For example, an Amidist text entitled *Kami honji no koto* (perhaps composed in the late fourteenth century) states:

> The "real kami" are kami such as evil spirits (*akuryō*) and spirits of the dead (*shiryō*). They are evil demonic deities (*akukijin*) that fill up heaven and earth. Multitudes of these kami pervade the territory [of Japan] and bring curses [on to the people]. They are worshipped by the people as their clan gods (*ujigami*). Since the original forms (*honji*) of all these kami are common people (*bonbu*), their hearts are filled with greed . . . Earth, water, fire, and wind cause diseases that harm the body, and the body becomes a poisonous snake; forever deluded, these kami make [their worshippers] fall into the three evil destinations.[96]

96 Quoted in Imahori (1990), p. 42.

In other words, the originals of "real kami" are not buddhas and bodhisattvas, as in the case of the "trace-kami"; they are common people (*bonbu*) who, after they die, are worshipped by the bereaved as the ancestors of their clan (*uji*) in the form of clan deities (*ujigami*). However, the essence of ordinary, deluded beings is the three afflictions (*bonnō*: greed, anger, and ignorance), and these do not disappear even after these people have been deified after death. Their afflictions are actually made worse by their new supernatural status; as a consequence, these kami harm people and lead them to damnation. *Kami honji no koto* clearly intends to demonstrate the negative nature of local deities who were worshipped without any apparent Buddhist influence, as is indicated by the fact that people after they die become dangerous, vengeful ghosts. In fact, Buddhist funerals were introduced to the countryside also as a way to prevent such a dire fate. Only after such funerals were the dead to be considered as benign patrons of the lineage.

We could say, then, that "real kami" constituted a handy target for Buddhist criticism that could be used to spread Buddhist customs and beliefs to the provinces. Radical Amidists could easily use a text like *Kami honji no koto*, expand its purport to include *all* kami and consider them all as "poisonous snakes," evil spirits bringing misfortune to the people.[97] Other texts developed the concept of "real kami" in a skeptical way to question folkloric religious practices. For example, Zonkaku in his *Shoshin honkai shū* quotes a story by the Chinese poet Bo Juyi on Chinese practices that had close parallels in Japan:

> Believing that a dragon lives on the bottom of a pond, people build shrines and worship it. When a disease spreads in the region, people say it is a curse [of the dragon]; when something bad happens in the district, people blame it. So they celebrate a religious ritual for it every year. In the ceremony they kill a little boar and pour sake, and offer them to the dragon. They have no way of knowing whether a deity really lives there or not. What people can see with their eyes is that rats come from the forest and foxes from the mountains, and drink the sake and eat the little boar. Now, what is the merit of these foxes? What is the fault of the little boar? There is absolutely no reason why every year a little boar should be killed to feed foxes.[98]

Other texts argued even more strongly against local deities of this kind. The *Kōgi zuikesshū*, for instance, says: "Those who in their present life receive favours from the kami, will be reborn as snakes in the next life. The Nenbutsu practitioners will be reborn in the Pure Land; those who worship

97 See Rambelli, "Just Behave as You Like" (forthcoming).

98 Quoted in Imahori (1990), p. 46. The original is in *Haku Shi bunshū* 4 *Fūyu* 4, "Kurobuchi no tatsu."

snakes will be retributed with the body of a snake."[99] However, the same text also indicates that even kami of this kind, in spite of the fact that they appear to be "identical to common people (*bonbu*)" and "eat meat," have as their originals "bodhisattvas of a high level [of attainment] and realised Tathāgatas."[100]

Another noteworthy element in the passage quoted above is the fact that the term *honji* is used in a more general way than as a mere reference to some Buddhist divinities, as it is commonly understood today. That means that, for the medieval Japanese, kami could have various origins: some were manifestations of buddhas and bodhisattvas, others were *postmortem* transformations of ordinary beings. Since ordinary beings could in fact also be manifestations of buddhas and bodhisattvas, it was not easy to tell which kami were "traces" and which were "real." It is perhaps for this reason that the *Shintōshū*, among others, concludes that it is wisest to worship them all with the respect due to manifestations of buddhas and bodhisattvas.[101]

Honji suijaku *and original enlightenment*

In the second half of the Kamakura period, a new typology of combinatory kami began to develop based on original enlightenment (*hongaku*) thought. For example, a passage that was probably added to *Nakatomi harae kunge* (late twelfth century?) in the mid-thirteenth century presents three categories of kami, derived from the three stages of enlightenment as outlined in the *Awakening of Faith* (*Dacheng qixinlun*):[102]

> There are three kinds of kami. First, kami of original enlightenment (*hongaku*); these are the kami of the Great Shrines of Ise. They are the wondrous embodiment of the essence of the principle and nature (*rishō*) of the original purity [of Dainichi], that is eternal and unchanging. Therefore they are called the Honoured Kami of the Great Origin. The wind from the world of things does not stir them, the sea of the mind is deep and overflowing without waves. There is no *dharma* outside the treasure-body and the single mind. This is called "original enlightenment."
>
> Secondly, kami of no-enlightenment (*fukaku*); these are the violent kami of Izumo etc. Far removed from the *dharmas* that come forth from [Dainichi's] presence as explained by [the teachings of]

99 In *Kokubun Bukkyō tōhō sōsho*, 2nd series, Sermons section, vol. 1, p. 68 (Imahori, 1990, pp. 46–7.)

100 Ibid., pp. 96–100.

101 Quoted in Imahori (1990), p. 74.

102 *Dasheng qixinlun*, in T 31, no. 1666. See Yoshito Hakeda (trans.) (1967).

> the One Vehicle, they abide in the four evil places [i.e. the realms of hell, hungry ghosts, animals, and *ashura*]. Even though they see Buddhist monks and hear the Sanskrit words of the various buddhas, they lose their mind-god. They are the likes of the evil demons of ignorance. Because these kami are the kami of true delusion, they are called "kami of no-enlightenment."
>
> Thirdly, kami of acquired enlightenment (*shikaku*); these are the kami of Iwashimizu [Hachimangū], Hirota, etc. After transmigrating, they awaken from the slumber of ignorance because they rely on the teachings of the Buddhist scriptures, and they return to original enlightenment. This is the acquisition of enlightenment. They are called "kami of acquired enlightenment."[103]

This classification was clearly devised in order to raise the status of the Ise shrines and their deities. It is interesting that the Japanese kami are here thought to embody modalities of Buddhist soteriology. Similar categorisations also appear in other texts of the late Kamakura period, and influenced in particular the development of Watarai or Ise Shinto.[104] They became a standard element of Buddhist kami discourse, and were to reappear in, for example, Yoshida Shinto and Hokke Shinto in the medieval and early modern periods.

The identification of some kami, and especially those connected with the imperial ancestor Amaterasu, as paragons of original enlightenment fostered a wholly new category of esoteric Buddhist kami rituals. In these rituals, Amaterasu appeared in true *honji suijaku* fashion as a supreme divine being with many faces. Some of these rituals were counted among the most potent of the reign – e.g. the *sokui kanjō* or "enthronement initiation," performed by the emperor while ascending the throne. In this ritual, Amaterasu is visualised as Dakini, a flesh-eating demon from the outer periphery of the esoteric Buddhist pantheon, as a "dragon-fox" (a combination of snake and fox?), and as the wish-fulfilling gem, a Buddhist relic of supreme nation-protecting powers.[105] Esoteric transmissions of this ritual were treasured as the deepest secrets of many temple lineages, and in this way, the ritual had its own life quite apart from actual imperial practice. Another ritual that was of a slightly less advanced level of secrecy, known variously as *Ise kanjō* ("Ise initiation") or *shosha kanjō* ("initiation concerning all shrines"), featured Amaterasu as Aizen Myōō (Rāgarāja, the King of Lust) and as a snake carrying the wish-fulfilling gem on its head.[106] In rituals of this kind, Amaterasu appeared both

103 *Nakatomi harae kunge*, in ST vol. Nakatomi Harae Chūshaku, p. 14. Translation in Teeuwen and Van der Veere (1998), pp. 50–1. We have slightly modified the translation.
104 See Tamura Yoshirō (1990), pp. 443–55, in particular pp. 444–7; Teeuwen (1996), ch. 1.
105 See Teeuwen (2000), and Iyanaga (1999b).
106 Itō Satoshi (1997).

as a "real kami" (a witch animal) and, at the same time, as the ultimate embodiment of original enlightenment: the three poisons themselves. Moreover, this understanding was given a ritual form: in the case of the *Ise kanjō*, as a means of esotericised shrine worship, complete with mudras, mantras and visualisations to be performed while entering the shrine gate (*torii*) and while worshipping in front of the shrine hall.

In the context of esoteric rituals of this kind, the various aspects of Amaterasu's multifaceted appearance were doctrinally tied together by identifying Amaterasu with Dainichi, the Dharma-body and ultimate source of all divinities of the mandalas itself. This inspired the teaching that Amaterasu had no "original source"; rather, as the "spirit" (*tamashii*) of Dainichi Amaterasu was in fact the source of all Buddhist divinities.[107] Embodying the Absolute in its most profound form (as a "real kami" manifesting the three poisons, which in turn represent pure original enlightenment), Amaterasu was fundamentally different from, and superior to, the various buddhas, who were beings of acquired enlightenment emanating from Amaterasu/Dainichi.

These theories flourished not only, or even primarily, at Ise, Amaterasu's home base, but first of all in Buddhist lineages who added Buddhist kami ritual to their ritual arsenal. No doubt the Mongol invasions and the troubles around the imperial succession from the reign of Go-Daigo (1318–39) onwards added to the fascination with Amaterasu that is so in evidence during the fourteenth century.[108] The result was that various kami closely associated with Amaterasu (Sannō at Mount Hiei and Miwa Daimyōjin at Mount Miwa were the most prominent among them) became nodes of new forms of kami doctrine and ritual.

Inverted honji suijaku

Both the identification of Amaterasu as Dainichi's spirit and the heightened ritual status of "real kami" served to carve out a doctrinal space where the dominant *honji suijaku* paradigm could be questioned. They created the possibility to construe a theology that gave prime importance to the kami.

This theology took the shape of what modern scholars have termed "inverted (*han*) *honji suijaku*." This doctrine was developed first and foremost by Tendai monks, in the context of Tendai kami rituals; its first full articulation has been traced to the works of Jihen, a Tendai monk with Ise connections who was most active in the 1340s.[109] This doctrine was firmly based on *hongaku* ideas. The Tendai monk Sonshun (1451–1514) wrote, for example: "Buddhas achieve the Way by acquired enlightenment; thus they

107 On this subject, see Kuroda (1996c), esp. p. 361.
108 See also Kaizu Ichirō (1995).
109 Sugahara Shinkai (1992), pp. 172–5.

are regarded as *suijaku*. Kami convert and teach by virtue of original enlightenment; thus they are called *honji*."[110]

Received interpretations claim that inverted *honji suijaku* was a reaction of the "Shinto world" to Buddhist hegemony, and the beginning of the resurfacing of a "true" Japanese spirituality. However, it should be emphasised that this modified form of combinatory religiosity was also the product of Buddhist intellectuals. Nonetheless, we must ask ourselves why Buddhist scholar-monks would develop doctrines denying the superiority of their own divinities. A possible explanation is the desire to push the medieval religious discourse to its own limits by investigating the original condition before the appearance of the first Buddha. Another possible rationale has more immediate sociological implications. It is well possible that inverted *honji suijaku* flourished among shrine monks (*shasō*), lower ranking members of the Buddhist ecclesiastical hierarchy in charge of the shrine parts of temple-shrine complexes. These doctrines enhanced the prestige and symbolic capital of the *shasō*, and fuelled their desire for independence. Once buddhas and bodhisattvas were described as mere abstractions from a distant realm, it became easier to downplay them or exclude them from the centre of the religious discourse, as happened, for example, in the Nativist movement (*kokugaku*) of the eighteenth century. In any case, the connections between inverted *honji suijaku* and Nativism are still to be investigated.

Yoshida Shinto and the emergence of non-Buddhist Shinto

The emergence of a fast-growing corpus of kami initiations culminated in the formation of the first Shinto lineages. Already in 1419, the Tendai monk Ryōhen wrote with special reference to the *sokui kanjō*: "These days, commoners from both the East and the West steal the transmitted treasures of the emperor, conceive of all kinds of foolish distortions, borrow some Buddhist rituals, and call the result the 'many lineages of Shinto' (*Shintō taryū*)."[111] Ryōhen distinguished roughly between Buddhist lineages (he mentions the Sanbōin lineage of Daigoji) and shrine lineages (Ise and Hirano, i.e. the Urabe clan), and shows a clear bias towards the latter. Also, the reading *shintō* (rather than the older *jindō*) was made explicit for the first time by Ryōhen in this same work, to denote a shift in the meaning of this term from a "kami realm" (either integrated in Buddhism, or not), to a "kami Way" in competition with Buddhism.[112] It was in this tradition that in the

110 Quoted in Stone (1999), p. 42.

111 *Nihon shoki kan daiichi kikigaki*, ST, vol. Tendai Shintō jō, pp. 518–19.

112 Teeuwen (2002). Ryōhen writes in *Nihon shoki kan daiichi kikigaki* (ST vol. Tendai Shintō jō, p. 517): "We do not read these characters *jindō* but *shintō*, without voicing, to indicate its straightforward character. Straightforward means that it is just as it is (*ari no mama*)." This new reading was inspired by a definition of the kami as embodiments of original enlightenment.

late fifteenth century Yoshida Kanetomo (1435–1511), who inherited the Hirano/Urabe lineage mentioned by Ryōgen, construed his famous Yuiitsu ("One-and-Only") Shinto.

Kanetomo's Shinto, too, was firmly based on the exoteric-esoteric principle that supported the entire cultic system of the age; but at the same time, he insisted on using a non-Buddhist terminology wherever possible, and identified his Shinto consistently as non-Buddhist.[113] Kanetomo described his own tradition as *genpon sōgen shintō*, "the Shinto of the original beginning and the ancestral source," and contrasted it to two "less original" kinds of Shinto: *ryōbu shūgō no shintō*, "the Shinto that associates [the two shrines of Ise] with the two mandalas [of esoteric Buddhism]" and *honjaku engi no shintō*, "the Shinto that identifies [kami as] traces of [Buddhist] originals and recounts shrine origins." In contradistinction to these latter, Kanetomo claimed, Yuiitsu Shinto "has existed since the foundation of the Japanese nation," and is free from Buddhist influence. His strategy in creating such a novel thing as a non-Buddhist Shinto, which was yet responsive to contemporary ritual expectations, can be summed up by his treatment of *kaji* (Skt. *adhiṣṭhāna*), arguably the most common format of deity worship in the exoteric-esoteric liturgy. While designing his own "Shinto *kaji*" complete with mantras, mudras, and visualisations, Kanetomo insisted that his *kaji* had a pre-Buddhist, kami origin. Even the word itself, Kanetomo insisted, was derived not from Buddhist Chinese but from the native Japanese word *kaji* "rudder": *kaji* is a method to "steer" divine forces as one steers a ship.[114]

Kanetomo was a crucial figure in the development of an autonomous system of shrine cults not only because of his theological innovations, but even more so because he succeeded in resurrecting a nationwide system of shrine management, under the control of the Yoshida house. The Neo-Confucian Shinto of the Edo period drew heavily on Yoshida Shinto, and Yoshida rituals remained current at shrines throughout the country until Meiji. At the same time, various Buddhist forms of Shinto (some new, others with medieval roots) also found unprecedented popularity through the activities of popular preachers, Shugendō practitioners, and Buddhist schools such as the Hokke (Nichiren) sect.

Perhaps most important is the fact that through these developments, the concept of a cultic system named "Shinto" became established among ever wider circles. As shown by Bernhard Scheid's chapter in this volume, different groups favoured different versions of "Shinto"; but at least all agreed that such a thing existed and was of paramount importance, and concentrated their efforts on claiming that their variety constituted the very core of this most sacred Way.

113 See Scheid (2000) and (2001), pp. 243–52.
114 Scheid (2000), pp. 133–4.

The Edo period and the culmination of honji suijaku

The Edo period was the time when *honji suijaku* doctrines and practices became pervasive and omnipresent in Japan. What had been until then the subject of theological discussions and religious narratives was expanded to all aspects of daily life. As illustrated in detail in Fabio Rambelli's chapter in this book, everyday activities such as different kinds of labour, and important lifecycle events such as childbirth, were associated with some combinatory deity of the *honji suijaku* pantheon. *Honji suijaku* also came to be directly related to social order and political authority. After the deification of Tokugawa Ieyasu as Tōshō Daigongen, which followed that of Toyotomi Hideyoshi as Hōkoku Daimyōjin,[115] many local daimyos deified either themselves or some of their ancestors, and rituals to these new combinatory kami became part of the ceremonial calendar. As in earlier *goryō* cults, important daimyos were shown to be incarnations of a kami, who in turn was a manifestation of a buddha. However, in contrast to *goryō*, daimyos were deified not to pacify their violent nature but to emphasise their benevolence. It is obvious, though, that divine status increased the symbolic power of central figures of the Tokugawa regime.

The extent of the influence of this model of religiosity can be illustrated by the following two anecdotes. When the daimyo Tōdō Takatora visited a certain temple in his domain, he asked a monk whether Śākyamuni has one or two bodies. The monk replied: "Śākyamuni has two bodies. One is that of the son of the great Indian king Śuddhodana; the other is you, your excellency."[116] The same discursive principles continued to be applied into the Meiji period. A petition from Higashi Honganji to the Meiji government dated 1871 explains: "The object of worship (*honzon*) of our sect is Amida Nyorai, but that is, respectfully speaking, just a different name for the heavenly ancestral deity of our imperial nation. When he appears out of wisdom, he is called Ame no Minakanushi no Mikoto; when he appears out of compassion, he is called Amida Nyorai."[117] In both these cases, deities are presented as combinations of various entities, including buddhas, kami, and human beings. The fact that statements like these were employed in official documents, and in dealing with the highest authorities, indicates that their theoretical assumptions were widely accepted. Obviously, during the Edo period *honji suijaku* was also explicitly used to flatter the authorities and give them religious legitimisation.

As an interesting parallel, though, we should not ignore the fact that peasant communities also began to enshrine their heroes as deities during this period. And their heroes, in many cases, were people who had challenged the Tokugawa authorities to protect the interests of the villagers. For example,

115 On Tokugawa Ieyasu's deification, see Sonehara Satoshi (1996) and Boot (2000).

116 Yasumaru Yoshio (1979), p. 23.

117 Yasumaru (1979), p. 7.

Itsutsudomoe Jinja in Makino (Kaminoyama City, Yamagata prefecture) enshrines the remains of Tarōemon and the other leaders of an uprising that took place in 1747.[118] It would be wrong to interpret this as an instance of popular superstition – the belief that those who have been unjustly killed could take revenge on the living. Itsutsudomoe Jinja is a monument to honour and commemorates the defenders of local rights, who defied the established order to fight for a more just society. In this case, the peasants appropriated the religious tools of the dominant classes for their own purposes.

Aside from cases such as this, the diffusion of the *honji suijaku* paradigm is also indicated by the fact that by the Edo period, most village shrines in Japan had been brought under the control of a Buddhist temple (*bettōji* or *jingūji*). This was justified by claiming that the kami in the shrine was a manifestation of the buddha or bodhisattva in the temple. Shrines held Buddhist images, texts, and ritual implements, and Buddhist services were routinely performed for their kami. "Buddhist" deities such as Myōken Bosatsu (Sk. Sudṛṣṭi, the Pole Star), Benzaiten (Sarasvatī), and Bishamonten (Vaiśravaṇa) were often the main icons of "Shinto" shrines and *not* of Buddhist temples. In addition, in many cases the tutelary deity of a village (*mura ujigami*) was defined as a *gongen*, that is, an "avatar" of a Buddhist divinity – even though it was usually not clear which one.[119] Even though the theological subtleties of the *honji suijaku* paradigm were obviously not known or relevant to the masses, vocabulary, ritual, imagery, and institutional practices clearly indicate a diffuse presence of *honji suijaku* elements throughout early modern Japanese society. One striking example of this is presented in Irit Averbuch's chapter in this volume, which describes the ways in which the *honji suijaku* paradigm was (and is) expressed through popular *kagura* performances at the level of the rural village.

Here, an important point is made by Ian Reader and George Tanabe (1998). They write that in the minds of "ordinary believers," associations between kami and buddhas were not grounded in an understanding of or belief in *honji suijaku* theory, but rather in the fact that deities of both categories served common objectives: "Kami and buddhas are fused together with the torch of pious expectation that both are equally capable of providing [practical] benefits."[120] Reader and Tanabe point out that deities of various origin were assembled at sacred sites, not as a result of *honji suijaku* theory, but because they had a common function in popular practice, namely the providing of various worldly benefits (*genze riyaku*). It was this assembling of dissimilar deities with similar functions that formed the basis for the

118 On Itsutsudonoe Jinja, see Naitō Masatoshi (1991), pp. 245–53. The shrine is today a remnant of the pre-modern religious paradigm, with its surviving combination of "Buddhist" and "Shinto" rituals.

119 On the presence of Shinto-Buddhist combinatory practice in villages in pre-modern Japan, see Takeda Chōshū (1972), esp. pp. 311–28.

120 Reader and Tanabe (1998), p. 151.

associations between them, and, in some rare cases, their assimilation. *Honji suijaku* theory, they argue, actually served to prevent rather than assist assimilation, because this theory distinguishes between different kinds of deities in order to prioritise one over the other.

Thus, Reader and Tanabe argue that *honji suijaku* was an insignificant force in Japan's "common religion," and in this sense their thesis would appear to be in complete contradiction with our claim that the *honji suijaku* paradigm pervaded pre-modern and early modern religiosity. The difference is not so much in our understanding of this religiosity, however, as in our definition of *honji suijaku*. We see *honji suijaku* not so much, or not only, as a way of prioritising some deities over others, but rather as a term for the concept that local deities are manifestations of some higher, universal entity. It was this concept that allowed different deities to be associated with each other, and, in some cases, assimilated. The notion that deities on the ground, be they kami, Buddhist images, or other sacred entities, share a common higher source of power served to make them mutually exchangeable in actual practice, and opened the way for joint worship at shared religious sites. In popular practice, there is of course no doubt that the fact that different deities were worshipped together for the same reasons and at the same sites was a stronger force for assimilation than any theory could ever be.

Despite the pervasiveness of combinatory religiosity, the Edo period also saw a strong tendency to "isolate" the kami, as symbolised by the emergence of a number of new attempts to define "Shinto" as an autonomous tradition. Most of these non-Buddhist forms of Shinto were linked more or less directly with the Yoshida tradition. In particular, various forms of Confucian Shinto developed, in a religious twist almost unthinkable in China. Hayashi Razan (1583–1657), Nakae Tōju (1608–48), Kumazawa Banzan (1619–91), Yamaga Sokō (1622–85), and Yamazaki Ansai (1616–82), among others, all proposed their own interpretations of what "Shinto" was and how it corresponded closely to some variant of Confucianism. Some even began to criticise and dismantle the traditional *honji suijaku* paradigm, often to create a new combination of "Shinto" and Confucianism. The Nativist discourse, too, made an attempt to define a "pure" Shinto, uncontaminated by foreign influences.[121] As a reaction, however, the dominant schools of thought put forth the idea of the "unity of the three teachings" (*sankyō itchi*), stressing the ultimate identity of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Shinto. A representative example was the work of Jiun Sonja (1718–1804), who devised a new combination of Shingon esoteric Buddhism, Confucianism, and Shinto.[122]

The Edo period also saw the emergence of a phenomenon called "popular Shinto" (*tsūzoku shintō*), spread among the populace at large by itinerant preachers of various orientations. Best known are perhaps Masuho Zankō

121 On Nativism, see H. D. Harootunian (1986) and Peter Nosco (1990).
122 On Jiun Sonja, see Paul B. Watt (1984).

(1655–1742) and Izawa Banryū (1688–1730). In their sermons they introduced classical texts to their audience, emphasised Confucian virtues, and stressed the primacy of Shinto over the other teachings of the time.

The "separation of the kami from the buddhas" and the destruction of traditional religion

The *honji suijaku* combinatory system, which characterised Japanese religiosity for several centuries, was destroyed systematically during the first years of the Meiji era. One of the first preoccupations of the newly established Meiji government was, in fact, that of "separating" kami from the buddhas, as indicated by a series of laws now known as the "separation edicts" (*shinbutsu bunri rei*), issued in the first months of 1868. However, *shinbutsu bunri* was not an act of separating two entities that at the time were already clearly distinct and different, such as Shinto and Buddhism.

As we have seen, kami and buddhas, and the doctrines and rites concerning them, had been highly interconnected and mutually interdependent throughout history. The new policy amounted to the creation *ex novo* of two contrasting religious formations, which since came to be known as "Shinto" and *bukkyō*, the new term for "Buddhism." The separation was a deliberate and systematic act of destruction of traditional religious practices and beliefs – with their social backgrounds, ideological allegiances, and world-views. Thousands of Buddhist temples were razed all over the country; monks were defrocked; sacred Buddhist objects, from buddha images to scriptures, ritual implements and temple records, were destroyed. At the same time, the shrine parts of shrine-temple complexes were drastically reconfigured by eliminating all objects even remotely connected to the new, simplified idea of what "Buddhism" was supposed to be.[123] An example of a shrine-temple complex (Suwa) and its fate during the separation campaign is described in detail in Inoue Takami's chapter in this book.

Hardest hit were the mountain centres of Shugendō, which were transformed into shrines of the new Shinto. This new Shinto was not an original, pre-existing religion, but a new religious and ideological formation completely subservient to the new imperial ideology. In the same way, "Buddhism" was reconfigured as the "inner other" of Japanese culture – useful for scapegoating foreign culture (while importing it indiscriminately) and, later, for making imperialistic claims over Asia.[124] In other words, the result was not just "State Shinto," the official state ideology of the prewar Japanese emperor system, but also a reactionary form of "State Buddhism."

123 On Meiji period anti-Buddhist persecutions and Meiji government religious policies, see Ketelaar (1990); Grapard (1984); Yasumaru Yoshio (1979); Tamamuro Fumio (1977); see also Liscutin (2000).

124 See e.g. Han Sŏkhŭi (1996).

The Meiji anti-Buddhist persecution was, as Allan Grapard has defined it, a veritable "Cultural Revolution."[125] One might also describe it as an act of "semioclasm": it destroyed the links connecting, in sacred entities (images, places, people, ideas, and objects), signifiers to their signifieds.[126] The persecution was so successful that today *honji suijaku* is something almost incomprehensible, a strange aspect of the "superstitious" culture of pre-modern Japan.

However, it is to be noted that some aspects of the "combinatory spirit" that animated pre-modern Japanese religiosity still remain today, albeit in a vague and superficial form. The ordinary Japanese do not seem to have a clear distinction in mind when dealing with kami and buddhas; actually, buddhas are usually called "kami" – a word that is used not in a Shinto sense, but as a translation of English terms such as "gods" or "deities." The implication is that there exist multiform, plural sacred entities that cannot be reduced to oversimplified images such as Buddhist "buddhas" and Shinto "kami." Another example is the ritual diversity of Japanese religious life. A common saying in Japan states that the Japanese are born Shinto, die Buddhist, and marry as Christians. This is obviously a simplification, but it is possible to see in this ritual variety a transformation of pre-modern combinatory mentalities. Even today, the sacred remains in essence a plural entity.

***Honji suijaku* as a paradigm**

***Political aspects of* honji suijaku**

The political effects and ideological implications of *honji suijaku* combinatory religiosity have been addressed by various scholars in a number of different ways.[127] A reactionary interpretation, animated by modernist Shinto chauvinism, was quite common until World War Two, but its effects are still present today. It holds that *honji suijaku*, as the most systematic form of amalgamation of kami and buddhas (*shinbutsu shūgō*), was something that threatened the purity of Japanese culture by mixing it with foreign elements. In fact, proponents of this position have tended to use the more negative *shinbutsu konkō* ("mixture of kami and buddhas"), with its connotations of randomness and bastardisation. Other conservative scholars have seen *honji suijaku* as a step in the so-called "Japanisation" of Buddhism, according to which a foreign cultural system (Buddhism) was successfully "homogenised" and "harmonised" within Japanese culture – whose core, however, remained unchanged. The concept of *wakon kansai* ("Japanese spirit and Chinese

125 Grapard (1984).

126 On the concept of "semioclasm," see Rambelli (2001a), pp. 22–33.

127 For a lucid overview, see Hayashi Jun (1984), esp. pp. 32–40.

techniques") is a good example of this attitude.[128] In both cases, culture (and Japanese culture in particular) is envisioned in essentialised terms; cultural interaction is not purely utilitarian but is presented as an impure form of degeneration and bastardisation. In this respect, it is interesting to note how a nationalistic agenda can influence the way in which people interpret religious and intellectual constructs of the past.

Progressive scholars such as Kuroda Toshio, on the other hand, have addressed *honji suijaku* as an important cultural and ideological formation, and have stressed its pre-eminent role in pre-modern Japanese culture. However, there is a clear tendency here, too, to see the impact of *honji suijaku* on the mentalities of the Japanese in essentially negative terms. Kuroda in particular emphasises the reactionary nature and function of *honji suijaku* religiosity especially as it manifested itself in ideas about the divine nature of the Japanese state (*shinkoku shisō*). In a significant essay, Kuroda wrote:

> *Shinkoku* thought played an important role in the reactionary politics of the *kenmitsu* system, and was emphasized for precisely this reason (. . .) *Shinkoku* thought was based primarily on the exoteric-esoteric logic of *honji suijaku*, which served as a powerful ideological support for the *kenmitsu* cult centers . . . The logic of *honji suijaku* attempted to preserve polytheism and subsume it within the ruling ideology by linking it to the genealogy of a transcendent being . . . It is only too evident that this form of thought comprised a powerful ideological weapon for preserving the power of the *kenmitsu* cult centers, with their inseparable links to state authority and their vast worldly holdings in the form of *shōen* estates.[129]

The indication of the connections between *honji suijaku* and the major *kenmitsu* religious institutions is one of the most significant contributions of Kuroda's scholarship. He pointed out that "exoteric-esoteric Buddhism's increasing emphasis on *shinkoku* thought coincided with the development of the heterodox/reform movements, which were accused of refusing to worship the deities (*jingi fuhai*) or of openly slandering them (*jingi hibō*)." These movements, advocating exclusive dedication to a single practice (*ikkō senju*), had the potential to "overcome the spell of polytheism"[130] – a "spell" that was instead employed by *honji suijaku* proponents to strengthen the domination system of *kenmitsu* religious institutions and, finally, of the medieval Japanese state. To this position of Kuroda, a number of objections must be

128 For a critique of *wakon kansai* and its later variant *wakon yōsai* ("Yamato spirit and Western technology"), see Rambelli (1999), esp. pp. 20–1.

129 Kuroda Toshio (1996c), pp. 377–8.

130 Ibid., p. 377. Kuroda has dealt at length with these issues in his essay "Shinkoku shisō to senju nenbutsu," now in Kuroda (1995), vol. 4.

made. Amidist heterodox and reform movements of medieval Japan did not necessarily express anti-*kenmitsu* positions; monotheism is not necessarily a liberationist religious formation (as opposed to a supposedly "spell-binding" polytheism); and *shinkoku* thought had much more complex cultural determinations.[131] But even so, Kuroda's suggestions are very valuable for the study of the social, religious, and ideological situation of medieval Japan.

Despite his vast historical knowledge and acute theoretical concerns, Kuroda was not completely free from so-called "vulgar Marxist" positions. In Kuroda's writings, central institutions (including religious centres) are often presented as powerful, quasi-totalitarian domination mechanisms. Peasants and commoners, on the other hand, are generally described as ignorant and superstitious folks who readily fall prey to the ruling bloc's propaganda ("spell") – largely based on religious doctrines and practices such as *honji suijaku*. The fact that Kuroda himself used the term "spell" is indicative of his view that ideologies have quasi-magical effects – a belief much like that of the peasants he claims to describe.

Even so, the reactionary aspect of *honji suijaku* indicated by Kuroda cannot be denied. In fact, *honji suijaku* could (and often did) function as a political model in which local communities, represented by their local kami, were considered as local manifestations of the lofty, central state institutions represented by the buddhas. Religious institutions also tried to become *de facto* independent from the state, and *honji suijaku* was their model to justify centre-periphery, high-low hierarchical structures. In other words, *honji* = *buddhas* became a term representing the centre of an institution, while *suijaku* = kami indicated the periphery which it supposedly ruled. It is true that, theologically speaking, the *honji* versus *suijaku* distinction is ultimately, i.e. metaphysically, non-existent; but in the secular realm of power relations, those two terms were also used to ground a social order that was meant to be stable and immutable. In addition, as Taira Masayuki, Satō Hiroo and others have shown, "trace kami" were used by land-owning religious institutions to promote and secure allegiance from residents in local estates.[132] Those who did not perform their duties toward the temple or shrine owning the land – understood as paying taxes and labouring in corvées – would be harshly punished by such deities, and also by their respective original buddhas.[133]

However, a reactionary, hierarchical ideology was probably not the only effect produced by the *honji suijaku* paradigm. The diffusion of central deities ("trace kami") to the countryside may also be seen as a process of liberation

131 On *shinkoku shisō* see also Fabio Rambelli (1996).

132 Taira Masayuki (1992), pp. 462–5; Satō Hiroo (1998), pp. 21–4; Kawane Yoshiyasu (1976).

133 Taira (1992); Satō Hiroo (1987), (1998) and (2000); Rambelli (2002).

from the unpredictability and violence of these gods, as suggested by several medieval authors.[134] Moreover, the violent and ambiguous character of pre-existing local deities could serve to give expression to opposition against central authorities; in this respect, local deities (the "real kami") could become very similar to *goryō*.[135]

Such a contested terrain of local sacredness, in which different visions of the kami – those advanced by *kenmitsu* central institutions and those of local residents – competed, was later entered by various Amidist movements. Even though they generally did not give much importance to the kami, most of them did tolerate the "trace kami," which they envisioned as adjuvants of Amida in his effort to have all people reborn in his Pure Land. They used the aforementioned apocryphal passage from the *Hikekyō* to strengthen their position, claiming that the kami as *daimyōjin* help Amida to save beings during the Final Age of the Dharma. In particular, Amida's manifestation as a kami (*wakō dōjin*) was envisioned as the first step in the establishment of a karmic relation (*kechien*) with the sentient beings.[136] On the other hand, Amidists were strongly against cults of "real kami" – both local spirits and ancestors. Their aim was to turn traditional ancestor worship into the worship of righteous people who had been reborn in Amida's Pure Land, as a way to strengthen their position in the provinces.[137] The attitude of another anti-*kenmitsu* group, the Hokke (Nichiren) school, was more or less identical, as shown by Lucia Dolce in her chapter in this volume. *Kenmitsu* institutions, on their part, were probably happy enough to tolerate local cults, since they not only did not interfere with worship of *kenmitsu* kami, but in some cases even required their intervention, such as in case of natural disasters, diseases, and so forth.

It is important to understand who was proposing and using *honji suijaku* combinations and cults. Central Buddhist institutions tried to control local areas through their deities, but local people may also have tried to gain some sort of "capital" (both economic and symbolic) by accepting *honji suijaku* identifications. In other words, it is essential to discern the acts of resistance and reappropriation performed by peasants and other groups when they accepted to worship the new deities from the centre. Anti-authoritarian aspects of *honji suijaku* can perhaps be found in some Buddhist forms of Shinto initiation (*kanjō*), in which the master teaches his disciple that by receiving the initiation the disciple is now equal (*dōtō*) with the emperor.[138] More specifically, we find here the idea that mid- and low-ranking monks could have access to the arcana of the imperium by receiving some mantras

134 See Imahori (1990).

135 On the transgressive and potentially subversive role of the *goryō* and similar deities, see Komatsu Kazuhiko (1989), esp. pp. 97–116.

136 *Kami honji no koto*, quoted in Imahori (1990), p. 29.

137 See Imahori (1990), pp. 52–61.

138 See, for example, *Miwaryū shintō genryū shū*, in *Ōmiwa jinja shiryō*, vol. 6, p. 347.

and mudras and Buddhist interpretations of some Shinto myths. As has been pointed out by Amino Yoshihiko, many groups in medieval society laid claim to a special relation with the emperor and in that way carved out a space of freedom from domination by local élites.[139] These issues still need to be examined in depth.

To conclude our discussion of the political functions of combinatory religiosity, we suggest that *honji suijaku* was an essential component of the *kenmitsu* episteme and ideology; as such, it played an essential role in medieval Japanese processes of hegemony formation. Here, we understand hegemony not in Leninist fashion, as the coercive imposition from above of a system of domination, but in Antonio Gramsci's terms, as an incessant process of negotiation, confrontation, and agreement among various social groups which, by participating in such processes, formed a "historical bloc" under the leadership of a "ruling bloc."[140] The aristocracy and the ruling lineages of major religious institutions co-opted other social groups by incorporating and organising them within their own system: peasants, city dwellers, etc. The upper echelons of the commoners were organised in *jinin* and *yoriudo* militia-like groups linked to shrines and temples, and given a special status outside of Ritsuryō norms; within the ecclesiastic hierarchy, low-ranking religious personnel (*shuto*, *dōshu*, etc.) constituted the *trait-d'union* with the populace at large. Ideas and practices related to *honji suijaku* constituted an important domain of hegemony formation, in which élites' visions and popular culture collided and were integrated in various ways. The term "bloc" should be interpreted here not as some solid, homogeneous and immutable entity, but as something more fluid and riddled with antagonisms; nevertheless, a connotation of strength is justified by the fact that "the system of shared power" (*kenmon taisei*) and, within it, the *kenmitsu* ideology constituted the dominant model of power in Japan for several centuries. As part of the dominant discourse, including elements of cosmology, epistemology, soteriology, social order, economics, etc., *honji suijaku* was an important ideological tool of the medieval and early modern Japanese "ruling blocs." Yet, it could also be appropriated by subalterns for oppositional purposes. The long history of popular revolts (*ikki*), whose leaders were often deified by the rebels, is perhaps an indication of the constant dimension of struggle and antagonism that has continuously pervaded Japanese culture.

The functioning of **honji suijaku** *logic*

The rapid diversification of the divine realm, and the multiplication of types of sacred sites, complicates the simple scheme of progressive kami-Buddhist amalgamation first set out by Tsuji Zennosuke. Tsuji described various stages

139 Amino Yoshihiko (1984) and (1996).

140 Gramsci (1971). See also Laclau and Mouffe (1985).

in the relation between kami and Buddhism, resulting in the absorption of the kami in the Buddhist realm during the final stage, that of *honji suijaku*. However, when one takes into account the proliferation of cults of other, "moot" kinds of deities, one notices that a great many equations are missing from Tsuji's model, and that the process was more complicated than his lucid scheme suggests. Kami cults were transformed in the course of the Nara and Heian periods not only through contact with Buddhism, but also, and to at least the same degree, under the influence of other phenomena, such as Yin-Yang practice and *goryō* cults – and, as Iyanaga Nobumi suggests in his essay, also of Indian Śaiva mythology. The same can be said of the Japanese Buddhism of these periods.

Multiple associations

This means that *honji suijaku* in the classical definition, as a theory arguing that "the kami of Japan have their original sources in buddhas and bodhisattvas,"[141] was a phenomenon of limited scope. As pointed out by Susan Tyler, "the idea that there was one precise correspondence of kami and buddha is a myth. If this is a sign of the full development of *honji suijaku*, then *honji suijaku* never developed fully."[142] Rather, *honji suijaku* took the form of complicated networks of associations, establishing links between kami and buddhas, but also between kami and other kami, kami and Yin-Yang deities, buddhas and other buddhas, Wisdom Kings, historical culture heroes both from Japan, China and India, and even demons and witch animals.

As typical examples we may cite deities such Tenman Tenjin, Hachiman, and even Shōtoku Taishi. As we mentioned briefly above, Tenman Tenjin is the deified form of minister Sugawara no Michizane who, after being injustly accused of treason, was exiled to Kyushu were he died. He was reborn as an angry and vengeful spirit, a *goryō* known as Tenjin. After being pacified, the *goryō* was believed to be a manifestation of the merciful bodhisattva Kannon. Here we see the combination of local, Yin-Yang, and Buddhist deities, and multiple transformations between human and supernatural beings. The cases of Hachiman and Shōtoku Taishi are similar, even though perhaps less dramatic. As we have seen, Hachiman is considered to be the deified form of Emperor Ōjin, and a trace kami (*suijaku*) of Amida. Shōtoku Taishi, the regent to whom the definitive consolidation of Buddhism in Japan is attributed, was believed to be an earthly manifestation of Kannon, and he was thought to act like a kami.[143]

141 Tsuji (1955), p. 41.
142 Susan Tyler (1989), p. 238.
143 On the cult of Shōtoku Taishi in medieval Japan, see Imahori (1999), esp. pp. 75–102.

Honji suijaku discourse employed all strategies of correlation and combination developed by exoteric-esoteric Buddhist hermeneutics. As a result, it construed macrosemiotic entities in which Japanese, Chinese, and Indian elements were clustered on the basis of similarities of the signifiers (linguistic and/or iconographic), and of the signifieds (functions, religious meanings, etc.). These similarities were identified by particular interpretations of myths, histories, doctrines, practices, and so forth. In this sense, a *honji suijaku* combinatory deity was often not just a dual entity (a buddha or bodhisattva and a kami), but a multiplicity in which different images of the sacred, ritual elements, myths, and narrative elements interacted in complex ways. Susan Klein's chapter in this book analyses some of the linguistic principles underlying combinations of kami and buddhas in medieval Japan, in particular from the standpoint of the association of Japanese waka poetry with Indian esoteric Buddhist *dhāraṇī* formulae. The principles of *honji suijaku* associations are also the subject of Iyanaga Nobumi's chapter in this volume. After showing a complex intertext of multifarious sources (sutras, commentaries, ritual procedures, myths, etc.) underlying the most important deities in the combinatory pantheon in medieval Japan, Iyanaga proposes the radical and fascinating hypothesis that *honji suijaku*, and Japanese combinatory religiosity in general, could be better understood as a Japanese transformation of Indian Śivaitic religiosity.

An example of a fully developed set of *honji suijaku* combinations is presented in *Bikisho*, a text of the Shingon Ono lineage from 1324, explaining the nature of the kami of Ise, Amaterasu.[144] Here, Amaterasu is presented as a large divine ensemble of cosmic dimensions, centred on two nondual entities: the deities enshrined in the main shrines of Ise (Amaterasu and Toyouke) on the "kami" side, and Śākyamuni and Mahāvairocana on the "Buddhist" side. Furthermore, according to a coherent mandalic logic, each of these nondual entities is multifaceted and plural, and their totality encompasses both positive and negative forces.

Let us follow the *Bikisho* in its argument. Amaterasu is defined in two ways: according to the "*Nihongi*," and to the teachings of Śākyamuni and Mahāvairocana. The text does not elaborate on the former (which probably refers to traditional myths and kami lineages), and expands solely on the latter, Buddhist side, for which it lists five different meanings. In other words, in a Buddhist context, the divinity "Amaterasu" refers to the following: (i) Mahāvairocana of the two mandalic realms (*ryōbu* Dainichi); (ii) Fudō Myōō and Aizen Myōō; (iii) Mahābrahmā (Daibonten); (iv) King Enma; and (v) Kōbō Daishi. This series of associations is hierarchically structured, from the cosmic Buddha of esoteric Buddhism in its two fundamental modalities; to two of its more powerful emanations (Fudō and Aizen); to the *deva* king of the Realm of Form, Brahmā; to the embodiment of negativity, King Enma,

144 ST, vol. Shingon shintō ge, pp. 505–21; in particular pp. 505–10.

the ruler of hell and suffering; and finally to a human manifestation, Kōbō Daishi, the patriarch of Shingon. It would lead us too far to discuss all these associations at length; we shall limit ourselves here to presenting three of them, namely Mahābrahmā, Enma, and Kōbō Daishi, to illustrate the operation of *honji suijaku* as a conceptual tool. (The combinatory logic of the *Bikisho* is also the subject of the second half of Iyanaga Nobumi's chapter in this book.)

Mahābrahmā

Mahābrahmā is himself a multiple entity. In medieval Japan, he was commonly understood as the collective persona of three distinct deities: King Māra of the Sixth Heaven, ruler of the Realm of Desire, and the creator of Japan; the *deva* Brahmā, king of the Realm of Form; and his emissary, the enigmatic Harama who appeared on earth to save the sentient beings from suffering. These three deties roughly correspond to the Indian *trīmurti*, respectively Brahmā (Bonten), Viṣṇu (Ichū), and Harama – which appears to be a different transliteration of Brahmā, but probably indicated Maheśvara (Śiva). According to *Bikisho*, these three gods in turn correspond to the three brothers mentioned in the *Rishukyō*; they are responsible for the creation of living beings as explained in Japanese mythology. In particular, two of them are the kami who created Japan by stirring the ocean with the heavenly halberd, Izanagi and Izanami.

At this point, the series of associations becomes even more complex. The place where the heavenly halberd struck the earth is where the *sakadono* (sake hall) of Ise's Outer Shrine is located, or, alternatively, corresponds to the sites of the shrines' central pillars (*shin no mihashira*). The *sakadono*, moreover, is the residence of Benzaiten; Benzaiten is the same as the bodhisattva Nāgārjuna. Nāgārjuna then becomes the focus of a new set of associations. As a personification of the heart/mind of the sentient beings, he is, on the one hand, the "father and mother" of all beings, and gives them religious guidance, in particular by revealing the Shingon teachings he received in a secret initiation in the Iron Stūpa in southern India. On the other hand, since the essence of the heart/mind of sentient beings is constituted by the three poisons (the three afflictions, usually represented in medieval Japan by a snake), Nāgārjuna stands for the white snakes that supposedly live underneath the central pillars of the two Ise shrines. These, in turn, correspond to Nanda and Batsunanda, the two cosmic serpents supporting Mount Sumeru. In another thread of associations, the central pillars of Ise are identified with the heavenly halberd (*sakahoko*) that created Japan; its shape, that of a one-pronged *vajra*, is the very shape of the Japanese territory. Finally, Benzaiten is also Otogohō, one of the protecting deities of Mount Hiei.

In other words, Amaterasu is: the three major Indian deities (Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva), Benzaiten, Nāgārjuna, the cosmic serpents Nanda and

Batsunanda, Mount Sumeru, the central pillars of Ise, the heavenly halberd, and Japan itself.

King Enma

Amaterasu is also associated with the source of negativity of the Dharma Realm, represented by the polymorphous entity constituted by King Enma (the ruler of hell), King Māra of the Sixth Heaven (the ruler of the Realm of Desire), and Shōten (a.k.a. Kangiten, i.e. the Indian god Gaṇeśa), the lord of obstacles. Shōten, in particular, is himself a polymorphous entity. As the *Bikisho* indicates, this divine entity is Shōten among the Indian gods; in the afterlife it is Enma; among sentient beings in this world it is Kushōjin;[145] in the life of the Buddha it is Devadatta; among humans (specifically, Japanese) it is Mononobe no Moriya, an ancient prince who fought against Shōtoku Taishi and thus became the human enemy of Buddhism par excellence; among the kami it is Susanoo, Amaterasu's bad-mannered brother who forced her to retire into the Heavenly Rock-Cave.

Kōbō Daishi

Bikisho further argues that Kōbō Daishi, the founder of the Shingon tradition in Japan, is a manifestation (*shohen*) or rebirth (*saitan*) of Amaterasu. Kōbō Daishi is also defined as a rebirth of Śākyamuni and Nāgārjuna from India (who, in turn, were rebirths of Amaterasu), and of his master Huiguo from China; in Japan, Kōbō Daishi is a manifestation of Hachiman, who in turn is a manifestation of Amida.

Conclusion

This example of Amaterasu's many faces in the *Bikisho* may suffice to show that *honji suijaku* was not so much a one-way buddhification of kami, but rather functioned as a tool to create new order in an increasingly chaotic divine realm. Many of the chapters in this volume will show that this new order (or, rather, multiplicity of orders) was seldom based on simple identifications of particular kami with specified buddhas. Rather, we find that deities, places, activities, and even objects were defined as local, temporary particularisations of larger, universal entities.

Bikisho shows that Amaterasu was conceived of as a conglomerate of different entities, all in some way interrelated. In a sense, then, it is not terribly surprising that authors such as Edward Seidensticker came to the

145 Kushōjin refers to a pair of Buddhist deities (probably deriving from Indian mythology) abiding on the shoulders of each human being, who keep a record of that person's good and evil deeds; when the person dies, these gods report to King Enma.

conclusion that Heian period religion was a "curious jumble," a "hopelessly incoherent mishmash of Shinto, Buddhism, Confucianism, necromancy and witchcraft."[146] Many authors, including specialists of medieval religion, seem to agree. However, it is important to emphasise here that this "jumble" was not only the religion of the Heian aristocracy, but a pervasive formation that characterised Japanese culture until the Meiji period. It is even more important, though, to stress another point made by Allan Grapard:

> What is found in Japanese cultic centers is not a hopeless incoherence but an extremely concrete combinatory phenomenon in which the various elements of the combination retained some of their pristine identity, their fundamental characteristics, but also gained by accretion and interplay (. . .), a mass of meaning that they did not have as independent entities.[147]

One should also keep in mind that associations of this kind were developed at many religious centres all over Japan, each in its own peculiar way. The strength, impressiveness, and appeal of such associations served to advertise the prominence and sacred power of the institutions that developed them. On the other hand, one should not be distracted by the superficial differences of the various instances of *shinbutsu shūgō*. It is quite obvious that they all shared similar philosophical and ideological assumptions, images, concerns, and vocabularies, which rendered *honji suijaku* an organic discourse.

Particularly important to the *honji suijaku* discourse were the following elements: Japanese, Chinese, and Indian religions, mythologies, and literatures used as a rich repertory of characters, images, and styles; the theme of the Three Countries (India, China, and Japan), with India playing a preeminent role; visions of a cosmic hierarchy, going from an absolute Buddha (depending on the tradition, Dainichi, Śākyamuni, or Amida) down to Japanese, human figures (such as Shōtoku Taishi, Kōbō Daishi, or even Hōnen), or even Japanese wild animals and ghosts; doctrines of salvation (the modality and degree of intervention in this world of buddhas and bodhisattvas through the medium of kami), usually – but not always – based on the philosophy of original enlightenment (*hongaku*); ideas about ways of interacting with the sacred that ranged from religious rituals to artistic production (poetry, music, etc.) to labour and everyday activities. As such, it also had important consequences in realms such as economics, politics, and social organisations.

What kept all these elements together in a more or less coherent fashion was a particular logic of association. As Allan Grapard has indicated, "the associations between divinities of a given cult obeyed linguistically grounded

146 Seidensticker (1964), p. 17.
147 Grapard (1992a), p. 75.

modes of combination such as association, metaphor, palindrome, anagram, and anagogy."[148] However, Grapard has also identified an "episteme of identity" underlying Japanese mythology and the world of mountain ascetics. This episteme can be characterised as seeing "the world (nature) and words (culture) in the specific lights of similitude, reflection, identity, and communication." Grapard compares this with the pre-classical European episteme as reconstructed by Michel Foucault.[149] Also on the basis of this, we think that we can go beyond a mere linguistic model and assume that the underlying *honji suijaku* discourse was a fully fledged semiotic system that we might term the "*kenmitsu* epistemic field."[150]

Let us give one example. In the correlations of Benzaiten mentioned above there are two main cores: the symbolism of the dragon/serpent and that of the pillar/tree/*vajra*. These symbols were combined with the Buddhist cosmology centred on Mount Sumeru, with medieval Japanese Buddhist epistemological and physiological doctrines concerning the heart/mind of sentient beings, and with esoteric Buddhist soteriology; with a semi-divine human being, Nāgārjuna (in Japanese, Ryūju) – whose name, incidentally, contained the two central symbols of this chain of associations, the dragon (*nāga* = *ryū*) and the tree (*arjuna* = *ju*); an Indian deity, Benzaiten; and a Japanese combinatory deity, Otogohō. Importantly, this chain of association, a veritable rhizomatic system in which nearly every component is connected with all the others, was not purely abstract and textual. On the contrary, it was rooted directly in the cultic centres it referred to by concrete references to architectural elements (the central pillars), buildings (the *sakadono*), places, and ultimately, to the very territory of Japan, of which Ise claims to be the spiritual and cosmological centre.

The result of these combinatory operations is a complex macrosign, itself the combination of several other macrosemiotic entities (the heart/mind, the *vajra*, patriarchs, deities, etc.) – all brought together by complicated semiotic operations involving the signifier and the signified:

Ryūju (Nāgārjuna)
- – heart/mind – salvation
- – *ryū* (*nāga*) – dragons/serpents – Benzaiten – Nanda and Batsunanda
- – *ju* (*arjuna*) – tree – central pillar – *sakadono* – *sakahoko* – Mount Sumeru – Japan

Such macrosigns mobilised the entire semiotic corpus of medieval Japan, that is, the totality of the knowledge and discursive strategies of the medieval

148 Grapard (1992a), p. 82; see also (1987) and (1988), p. 264.
149 Grapard (1989). The citations appear, respectively, on pp. 182 and 161.
150 Rambelli (1994), esp. pp. 393–7.

episteme. As such, they took on a character that transcended the mere conditioned, historical, and phenomenal dimensions.

Bruce Lincoln states in his analysis of the correlative mechanisms in ancient Indo-European cultures:

> The . . . items in any such correlation are thus placed in homologic relation, a fundamental consubstantiality and interchangeability being posited between them. Each item in such a homology is seen to consist of and derive from the material substance of the other. The . . . items are thus what I call *alloforms* – that is, alternative shapes of one another.[151]

In exactly the same way, Benzaiten does not just "stand for" Nāgārjuna or the central pillars of Ise; these three items are "alternative shapes of one another." They are particular occurrences of the different modes of existence and manifestation of a sacred entity. Such "consubstantiality" or substantial identity was always counterbalanced by phenomenal, actual differences. In other words, *honji suijaku* similarity, as already suggested by James Boon for the Tantric culture in Bali, never means absolute identity.[152] On the contrary, similarity is always stipulated between conflicting positions of identity and difference in a coherent non-dualistic logic. This logic neither establishes a relation between pairs of objects, as most authors still insist, nor reduces differences to a uniform and undifferentiated substratum (be it the *honji* or the *suijaku* side of the entity). On the contrary, a divinity is always described as a complex combination of different entities. What Grapard calls an "episteme of identity" can in fact be reformulated as an episteme of "multiple identities" or "identical multiplicities" – an aspect of *honji suijaku* that is usually ignored despite its uncanny contemporary, postmodern resonance.

151 Lincoln (1991), p. 168.
152 Boon (1990).

2

FROM THUNDER CHILD TO DHARMA-PROTECTOR

Dōjō hōshi and the Buddhist appropriation of Japanese local deities*

Irene H. Lin

Introduction

My inquiry concerns something which appears to lie on the margins of Japanese and Buddhist literature, namely a tale about the thunder child Dōjō hōshi found in the *Nihon ryōiki*, the earliest collection of Buddhist legends in Japan composed at the beginning of the ninth century. Containing a mélange of Buddhist and folkloric elements, this story is a distinctive Buddhist product and as such provides a lens for viewing the initial encounter of Buddhism with Japanese local culture.

The tale represents a pre-*honji suijaku* discourse, i.e. one that predates the theory in which Japanese deities were believed to be the manifestations of buddhas or bodhisattvas. During the inception of Buddhism in Japan, the kami were adopted into the Buddhist pantheon as guardians of the Dharma. Thunder gods were among the local deities incorporated into the Buddhist heavenly realm in order for them to serve Buddhist ends. This process is illustrated by the story of a thunder child, who derives his strength from his father, also a thunder god, and becomes a servant at the first Buddhist temple in Japan – it is at this point that he receives the name Dōjō hōshi – and finally is made into a champion of Buddhism.

This chapter will examine the Buddhist appropriation of Japanese local deities through the making of Dōjō hōshi into a Buddhist hero. First, I present the story followed by standard critical interpretations, and point to their limitations – in particular, their blindness to this story's particular Buddhist concerns. Next, I summarize other stories related to the Dōjō hōshi tale,

* I would like to thank Carl Bielfeldt, Bernard Faure, Paul Harrison, Iyanaga Nobumi, F. Janice Kam, James Robson, and Julius Tsai for their helpful criticisms.

together with the mythic and folkloric background that gave birth to the character and strength of the thunder child. Then, I move to the scene of the story, Gangōji, for the showdown of imperial, local and Buddhist forces in which Buddhism will ultimately triumph. The addition of Buddhist elements to the myths and folklore relating to the thunder child becomes apparent here.

I will then explore the different stages of the development of thunder gods: from their earlier image in the myths set during the Age of the Gods up through views about them found in later popular culture and imperial myths. The survey includes material from the end of the Nara period to the end of the Heian period. This section will bring to light the different interests and strategies at work in the manipulation of the tales about thunder gods. We will see how thunder gods were associated with turbulent deities and ominous spirits, who were held responsible for the rampant calamities of the time, and finally how the ancient Ritsuryō state employed Buddhist rituals to transform the thunder gods from disaster-causing deities into protector deities.[1]

Finally, I discuss Dōjō hōshi's employment by a Buddhist institution as a servant as representing the adoption of his family of turbulent deities as guardians of the Dharma. Through the symbolic evolution of the thunder child – the superscription of its symbolism – we will see how the Buddhist interpretation became dominant, yet was enriched by the resonance of previously existing elements.[2] I will be following the main plot of the making of this Buddhist hero, stopping here and there to examine the underlying Buddhist subplots, such as how Buddhism dealt with external threats (i.e. opposition from the various aristocratic families and local deities) and with internal tensions (e.g. the status of children in temples).

Through the appropriation of the rich tradition of Japanese myths and folk tales regarding divine children and thunder gods, the Buddhists were able to create a new legend which transformed a divine thunder child – a prototype of cultural heroes and kami – into a champion and protector of Buddhism, overpowering both local spirits and imperial forces. Thus the symbol of the thunder child was both a product of history and an instrument of cultural, social, political, and religious change.

1 The Ritsuryō is the body of law adapted from the Tang administrative and penal codes. The state formation and political regime based on it was made up of literati officials of the imperial court, trained in Confucian classics. The officials treated the Buddhist clergy as if they were part of the government bureaucracy. For further discussion on this topic, see Abé (2000).

2 Prasenjit Duara (1988). Duara defines "superscription of symbol" as a symbolic evolution where cultural symbols are not radically discontinuous, but rather are able to lend continuity at one level to changing social groups and interests even as they themselves undergo transformation. See especially p. 780. See also Jacques Le Goff (1980) for a study of how the different ecclesiastical and popular images of Saint Marcellus of Paris illustrate the change of myths and symbols over time, i.e. the layered and historically stratified nature of myths and symbols.

The legend of Dōjō hōshi

The story of Dōjō hōshi appears in the *Nihon ryōiki* as follows:[3]

> *On a Boy of Great Physical Strength Whose Birth was Given by the Thunder's Blessing*
>
> In the reign of Emperor Bidatsu,[4] . . . there was a farmer in the village of Katawa in Ayuchi district of Owari province. While he was working to irrigate the rice field, it began to rain. He took shelter under a tree and stood there holding a metal rod in his hands. When it thundered, he raised the rod in his hand in fear. At that moment the thunder struck in front of him in the form of a child, who made a deep bow. The farmer was about to strike it with the metal rod when the child said, "Please don't hit me. I will repay your kindness." The farmer asked, "What will you do for me, then?" The thunder answered, "I will send you a baby to repay your kindness." . . .
>
> Some time later a baby was born to the farmer; the baby had a snake coiled twice around its head, and the snake's head and tail hung down its back.

The story goes on to describe how during his teens the child challenged a prince, who was known for his great strength, to a stone-throwing contest. The boy was stronger and was able to throw farther than the prince. The story also reports other episodes.

> Some time later the boy became an acolyte at Gangōji. At that time no night passed without some acolytes in service at the bell hall being murdered. The new acolyte said to the monks at the temple, "I will put an end to these tragedies by killing the evil ogre," and the monks approved of his proposal. He proceeded to place four lamps and four men at the four corners of the bell hall and said to them, "When I get hold of the ogre, take the covers off the lamps." Then he hid himself at the base of the door.
>
> At midnight the huge ogre appeared, but departed at the sight of the boy, returning again before dawn. The boy seized it by the hair and pulled hard. The ogre struggled to extricate itself, but the acolyte pulled it into the hall. The four men at the four corners, frightened, were unable to remove the lamp covers so that the boy had to light

3 In general I follow Kyoko Nakamura's translation (1973), pp. 105–8, with slight modifications where necessary.

4 Nakamura gives Bitatsu here, but the *Nihongi* has Bidatsu, W. G. Aston, trans. (1972), vol. 2, p. 90.

> the lamps, one by one, while dragging the ogre around the hall. About dawn, the ogre, all its hair having been torn out completely, escaped. In the morning people traced the blood stains as far as the crossroads, where a wicked former slave of the temple was buried, and they discovered that it was the ghost of that dead man. The hair is still preserved in Gangōji as a treasure.

The acolyte became a lay brother and took up residence at Gangōji. When some princes stopped the flow of water that irrigated the rice fields of the temple, he propped open the sluice gate with a plow which would ordinarily take ten men to carry, thus restoring the flow of water. However, the princes again took away the plow and closed the gate, cutting off the water supply for the temple once more. Thereupon, the lay brother placed a stone at the gate that was so heavy that it would have required more than a hundred men to lift it. The princes, frightened by his great strength, never dared to cause any trouble again. The monks of the temple allowed him to be ordained, naming him Dharma master (*hōshi*) Dōjō. The story concludes by saying that the mighty hero of Gangōji owed his extraordinary strength to the merits accumulated in his former lives.

Several scholars have interpreted this story and addressed its relation with Buddhism. The folklorist Yanagita Kunio, in his discussion of the evolution of the cult of thunder gods in *Imōto no chikara* ("The Strength of the Younger Sister"), said that this tale does not contribute to the Buddhist faith nor to the reputation of Gangōji, but rather reflects the type of story in which "a human being receives strength from a deity" and the belief that someone struck by lightning is the son of a deity.[5] Similarly, the translator of the *Nihon ryōiki*, Nakamura Kyoko, placed the tale in the general category of "non-Buddhist" legends for the reason that the story "neither expresses Buddhist ideas nor uses Buddhist terms, but is marginally Buddhist since it provides a life story of a monk."[6]

A number of scholars have recognized some of the Buddhist elements in this account, but have not gone far enough in their analysis. Yamane Taijō, for example, sees the function of the tale as a description of the development of the idea of karma.[7] By correlating what are viewed as strange occurrences with the idea of present karmic retribution, he sees this story as generating faith in Buddhism, rather than inspiring awe of supernatural strength. Even though I agree with Yamane that the story does introduce the idea of great strength owing to one's karma, this point remains a peripheral issue in view of the overriding motif of transforming a thunder god into a servant of Buddhism, as I will discuss in more detail below.

5 Yanagita Kunio (1990b), p. 94.
6 Nakamura, trans. (1973), p. 73.
7 Yamane Taijō (1961), p. 62.

Michael Kelsey proposes an allegorical reading of this tale as the dramatization of the conflict between Buddhist and local cults. He sees Dōjō hōshi as a mediator between those two forces, owing to his status as a Buddhist lay brother on the one hand, and as the son of a native deity on the other.[8] While Kelsey is correct in perceiving such a conflict and in pointing to the Buddhist transformation of native Japanese myths, he does not discuss the strategies and issues involved in the deliberate Buddhist employment of the thunder child Dōjō hōshi as an instrument of spreading the Buddhist faith. One of the key elements he overlooks is the adoption of an entire group of turbulent kami (*aragami*), of which Dōjō hōshi is a representative member, into the Buddhist family of Dharma protectors (*gohō*).[9]

Other issues in the story that demand further inquiry are the role of Dōjō hōshi in the attempt by the imperial authorities to consolidate their power and, at a later time, the status of children (*dōji*) as servants in medieval temple-shrine complexes – a status that appears to be more or less directly related to a symbolism first established with the tale of Dōjō hōshi. Before moving on to a discussion of the Buddhist interpretation of the thunder child, let us pause momentarily to examine the evolution of thunder child symbolism, beginning with the folkloric stratum from which the Buddhist symbol drew its power.

Traversing folk tales

According to Yanagita Kunio, the Dōjō hōshi story in the *Nihon ryōiki* is the main legend of a cycle of five tales related to this character; other scholars have followed suit. This grouping seems somewhat arbitrary, since the other four stories in the cycle are minimally related to Dōjō hōshi. Each of the stories could just as easily fall into a number of different cycles, as will be discussed below. Furthermore, Yanagita suggests that this cycle of tales is not Buddhist, but belongs instead to the genre of folk legends about the bestowal of strength from heavenly deities, the sons of gods who become cultural heroes, and the origin of important local families.[10] Yanagita also connects the Dōjō hōshi cycle to related themes: "heaven-sent children" (*mōshigo*), children miraculously born from places such as a finger or a knee, abandoned children in the form of water animals picked up by old couples and raised as their own, and children born from unusual or substitute "wombs" or receptacles such as Momotarō (Peach Boy) and Taketori no hime (Bamboo

8 W. Michael Kelsey (1981), p. 28.

9 *Aragami* is usually translated as rough gods (*kōjin*) but I prefer to adopt Bernard Faure's translation of the term as turbulent deities. See Bernard Faure, *Erecting Obstacles* (forthcoming).

10 See Yanagita (1990a) and (1990b).

Princess).[11] Cornelius Ouwehand, who has also studied the Dōjō hōshi tale, agrees with Yanagita's assessment and says that it belongs to a group of tales of which "the Buddhist garb is only a cloak for old pre-Buddhist religious contents."[12]

Yanagita's structural approach sees tales as variations on a number of basic folkloric themes. However, I think it is also important to locate tales and symbols in their social, political, and religious contexts. Abe Yasurō, in his study of Gangōji, has provided an important contextualization for the Dōjō hōshi story.[13] He points to the friction between imperial and Buddhist interests, and to the servile position of children in temples. Abe's analysis represents a good starting point to unpack the multiple layers of meaning superimposed on the figure of the thunder child. We can further develop Abe's study by following Prasenjit Duara's methodology of examining the "interpretative arena" of myths, where images and sequences common to different versions of myths come to be negotiated and redefined by changing social groups and interests. Thus, even when a new interpretation becomes dominant, the previous versions do not disappear completely, but rather enter into a new relationship with it. The continuity provided in the process of superscription, rather than erasure, is what enables new codes of authority to be written, and the old frontiers of meaning to be expanded to accommodate the changing needs of historical groups.[14] The new draws power from the resonance of the old, tapping into the legitimacy of the old.

By examining the Dōjō hōshi tale within its own "interpretative arena" we will be able to see how Buddhists drew on the power of the folkloric symbol and myths of the thunder child, imbuing them with additional meaning in order to produce a new Buddhist thunder child and accordingly a new Buddhist discourse of the thunder child. Such an interpretation will also illuminate ideological contentions and power relations at play in such a complex Buddhist strategy of appropriation. With this agenda in mind, let us now turn to the folkloric elements of this tale, and examine the stories that have traditionally been grouped in Dōjō hōshi's cycle to see how these elements relate to the new Buddhist rhetoric, such as putting the supernatural strength derived from local deities to work for Buddhism.

11 For discussion of these types of children, see Ōshima Takehiko (1961). C. G. Jung also favors this type of grouping, for example, in his proposition of archetypes as a useful means for finding the basic patterns of a variety of cultural products, see Jung and Kerenyi (1949); Jung (1959).

12 Cornelius Ouwehand (1964), pp. 150–1.

13 Abe Yasurō (1995).

14 Duara (1988), p. 791.

Clan genealogies

The first story in the *Nihon ryōiki*, which is also recorded in the *Nihon shoki* but with some slight differences, involves the capture of the thunder god by Chiisakobe no Sugaru under orders of Emperor Yūryaku.[15] In the *Ryōiki* version, Sugaru wore a red headband as a protective measure against the thunder, carried a halberd with a red banner (a sign of royal messengers), and went to invite the thunder to the palace.

> While galloping back to the palace, he asked himself why it would fail to accept the emperor's invitation, even if it were a thunder kami. As he returned, it happened that the lightning struck between Toyuradera and Iioka. On seeing it, Sugaru sent for priests to place the thunder into the portable carriage, and he escorted it to the imperial palace, saying to the emperor, "I have brought the thunder kami." The thunder gave off such a dazzling light that the emperor was terrified. He made many offerings and then had it sent back to the original site, which is called "Hill of Thunder."[16]

In the *Nihon shoki* version, when Sugaru went to the hill of Mimuro to seize the thunder deity he caught a great serpent. Back at the palace, the thunder rolled and the serpent's eyeballs flamed, which sent the emperor fleeing to the inner quarters in fear, since he had not practiced religious abstinence.

Yanagita Kunio and Nakano Takeshi both regard this tale as a part of the genealogy of the Chiisakobe clan that worshipped the thunder god.[17] The Chiisakobe name is particularly significant since in addition to Chiisakobe no Sugaru being known for possessing great strength, the term *chiisako* means "little child," which ties into the folktale motif of a child possessing great strength, as in the story of Issun-bōshi (Little one-inch), who despite his size, subjugates two demons.[18] The mallet he carries with him, which will make him grow to normal size upon striking his body, is reminiscent of the iron rod used to catch the thunder god in the Dōjō hōshi story. In that tale the thunder god fell from the sky in the form of a little child (*chiisako*) who subsequently defeated the ogre at Gangōji.

Returning to the *Nihon ryōiki* story on the capture of the thunder god, it is important to stress the power relationship between the emperor and local deities. Even though the thunder is fierce and violent, it could nonetheless be captured by an imperial messenger or be ordered to appear before the emperor. The fact that the thunder god manifested itself as a great serpent in

15 Compare the versions in Nakamura, trans. (1973), pp. 102–4 and Aston, trans. (1972), vol. 1, p. 347.

16 Nakamura, trans. (1973), p. 103. The translation has been slightly modified.

17 Yanagita Kunio (1990b), p. 94 and Nakano Takeshi (1994), p. 163.

18 See "Issun-bōshi," in Hisamoto Shimazu (ed.) (1929), pp. 154–7.

the *Nihon shoki* version is also significant and will be addressed below. A further interesting detail is that in the *Ryōiki* version, the thunder god later transforms itself from a terrifying force into a farcical character: when the thunder was upset at the inscription on Sugaru's tomb, "Sugaru who caught the thunder," it struck the pillar, but got caught between the splintered pieces, and had to be rescued from near death and freed by the emperor. This transformation of the thunder god into a comical figure in early Buddhist legends (*setsuwa*) set a trend that would continue later on in the medieval short stories (*otogizōshi*).

The other three stories in the cycle are also related to the genealogy of important clans, two being about the granddaughter of Dōjō hōshi, who inherited his great physical strength, and another being about a clan also known for the strength of its members. The first tale, "On taking a fox as wife and bringing forth a child," is the origin story of the Kitsune no Atae clan in Mino province, whose founder was famous for the enormous strength he derived from having a fox (*kitsune*) as a mother.[19] A second and complementary story belongs to the genealogy of Dōjō hōshi's family, and gives an account of a granddaughter who was endowed with immense strength, greater than that of five hundred men.[20] Here the Buddhist take on the ending is clear in that the protagonist's strength is not attributed to her ancestor, Dōjō hōshi, but to the karma produced when she offered big rice cakes to the Three Treasures of Buddhism during a past life. This story therefore reflects a Buddhist effort to spread the teachings of karmic retribution among the common people.

The protagonists from the two previous stories meet in the last tale of the Dōjō hōshi cycle, "On a Contest between Women of Extraordinary Strength."[21] This story recounts a battle of strength between Dōjō hōshi's granddaughter and the fourth-generation descendant of the Mino Kitsune clan, who robs passing merchants of their goods. Although Dōjō hōshi's granddaughter is small in stature compared to the Kitsune woman, whom we are told had a large build, she nonetheless defeats Kitsune. Here we see the descendant of a local fox spirit who is depicted as a transgressor of law and order, contrasted with that of a Buddhist monk who is represented as the upholder of justice and peace. Furthermore, we see the triumph of the descendant of the "naturalized" Buddhist divine child of a thunder deity over the divine child of a fox. We are also reminded of the folktale motif of the little child with miraculous strength, whose undertakings earn her the status of a heroine.

19 Nakamura, trans. (1973), pp. 102–5. It is important to note here the arbitrariness of the way stories are grouped in a cycle, since this story could legitimately be classified with another group, such as taking a fox as bride. On this point, see Ikeda Hiroko (1983).

20 Nakamura, trans. (1973), pp. 197–9.

21 Ibid., pp. 163–4.

Legends of divine children as cultural heroes

The legends of cultural heroes pave the path along which Dōjō hōshi will travel. Yanagita Kunio states that the name Dōjō hōshi appears as that of the giant who opened the country in ancient times and that legends customarily refer to him as Ōdō hōshi.[22] Thus the Dōjō hōshi legend in the *Ryōiki* could be seen as a variant of a larger group of widely distributed stories regarding the family of cultural heroes who are sons of deities, often thunder gods, and giants who possess miraculous strength and perform wondrous deeds. These heroes are said to belong to a related genre of "men who receive strength from a deity."

Ouwehand relates Dōjō hōshi to other legendary heroes like Benkei and Kintoki. In most legends, Kintoki's real mother sees a red dragon descending to her in a dream during a thunderstorm and becomes pregnant, giving birth to a strong wonder-boy, who is red in color.[23] He is a thunder child raised by a *yama-uba* (an old woman of the mountains). Accounts of his strength are highlighted by his wrestling matches with wild animals and his subduing of Shuten dōji, the demon of Ōeyama, known for abducting youths.[24]

Similarly, Benkei's mother also conceives in a supernatural manner, while his father's identity remains unclear. Benkei is born as a "demon child" (*onigo*) after being in his mother's womb for eighteenth months; at birth, his hair reaches to his shoulders, he has all his teeth, and can run as swiftly as the wind.[25] Benkei travels the same path as other strong divine boys, beginning with the killing of a giant carp that has devoured his mother. According to the Izumo tradition, his mother, the daughter of a blacksmith, eats iron during her pregnancy, and thus places herself among the race of strong women who are descendants of Dōjō hōshi.[26]

The legends of Benkei, Kintoki, and Dōjō hōshi contain the same motifs and elements of a prototypical legendary cultural hero: miraculous conception, divine origin, possession of Herculean strength at birth, subduing of demons at the beginning of a heroic career, and relation to thunder gods. Moreover, the hardships or obstacles overcome by the heroes reflect the

22 Yanagita (1990b), p. 95. The association of thunder deities with cultural heroes can also be seen in the case of Susanoo who is the heavenly god and the god of waters and the underworld, a destroyer and bestower of life, a cultural hero. Ouwehand (1964), p. 386.

23 Ouwehand (1964), p. 169; Asakura Haruhiko, Inoguchi Shōji *et al*. (1963), p. 165. For a study of Kintoki, see Takasaki Masahide (1971).

24 For studies of Shuten dōji, see Takahashi Masaaki (1992); Komatsu Kazuhiko (1997); Satake Akihiro (1992); Lin (2001), especially ch. 2 "The ideology of imagination: The tale of Shuten dōji as a kenmon discourse." See also *Heike monogatari* in Hiroshi Kitagawa and Bruce T. Tsuchida, trans. (1975) and *Yoshitsune* in McCullough, trans. (1971) for accounts of Kintoki's valor, wisdom, courage, and unparalleled strength.

25 Ouwehand (1964), p. 174 and Nagano Shōichi (1969), p. 320. See "Benkei monogatari," in Ichiko Teiji *et al*. (ed.) (1989–92), vol. 2, pp. 201–90.

26 Ouwehand (1964), p. 174.

notion of what might be called "suffering kami" in search of enlightenment.[27] In addition, Kintoki and Benkei are further identified with the symbol of thunder gods by their carrying of an axe and a halberd respectively, in addition to the "seven implements" (*shichi dōgu*) representing the "thunder weapons."[28]

Contrary to Yanagita's rejection of the Dōjō hōshi story's ties to Buddhism, all of the protagonist's endeavors bring glory to Buddhism. Even though he was able to subjugate demons and imperial princes, Dōjō hōshi was still a servant of the Buddha at Gangōji. Dōjō hōshi's connection to that temple no doubt enhanced his reputation. Let us now turn to some of the Buddhist additions to the thunder child myths, beginning with the new setting for the tale at Gangōji.

Gangōji and the interplay of kingly authority (*ōbō*) and Buddha Dharma (*buppō*), and local and Buddhist forces

There were many reasons for the selection of Gangōji as the location of the new home of the thunder child, Dōjō hōshi. Examining the religious and historical background of the story will help us to understand Buddhism's encounter with imperial and aristocratic families and with local deities. Since Dōjō hōshi is supposed to have been born during the reign of Emperor Bidatsu (r. 572–86), his stories take place at the difficult time of Buddhism's arrival in Japan, i.e. the latter half of the sixth century and beginning of the seventh century.[29]

As the first Buddhist temple in Japan, Gangōji was a key site for the portrayal of the transmission and development of Buddhism in a new land. The temple, originally called Asukadera or Hōkōji, was founded by Soga no Umako in 588, and was subsequently moved to Nara in 716.[30] In the opening

27 This is a type of tale known as *kishu ryūritan*, or tales of nobles in exile. The noble is typically a son of kami, of aristocratic background, who because of a wrong he committed, is exiled as a suffering and wandering kami. He is only allowed to return when he has done an act to redeem himself. See *Nihon denki densetsu daijiten* (1994), pp. 292–3 for an explanation of *kishu ryūritan.*

28 Asakura, Inoguchi *et al*. (1963), p. 165 and Ouwehand (1964), p. 177. On the issue of thunder weapons see Matsumoto Nobuhiro (1928), section on "les emblêmes du dieu de tonnerre," pp. 63–70, and Edwin O. Reischauer (1940). Matsumoto's theory is that instruments such as arrows, bows, spades, and swords are symbols of the thunder gods in the past.

29 Kyōkai follows the *Nihon shoki* and gives the date of introduction of Buddhism to Japan as 552, when King Syŏng-myŏng of Paekche presented a bronze statue of Śākyamuni Buddha along with a number of scriptures and objects to Emperor Kinmei. Other sources such as the *Gangōji garan engi* give 538 as the year of introduction.

30 Gangōji is the temple of the imperial family and Hōkōji is the Soga's clan temple.

statement of the *Gangōji engi*, Shōtoku Taishi says that the prosperity of the temple is due to Empress Suiko's virtue.[31]

In fact, Buddhism was established in Japan as a state religion during the reign of Empress Suiko and her regent, Prince Shōtoku. The patronage of Gangōji on the part of the imperial family and the nobles indicates that the temple was a powerful sacred center that symbolized and combined both imperial institutions (*ōbō*) and Buddhist teachings (*buppō*). The zelkova tree (*tsuki*) at Gangōji has been viewed as a cosmic tree; a miniature of Mount Sumeru was built on the hill to the north-west of the temple as a symbol of the Buddhist center of the universe.[32] The area was also the stage on which the drama of imperial power was played out, where alliances were pledged to the emperor, and where imperial dinners and banquets were held.[33] We can clearly see here the mapping of Buddhist cosmology onto native geography and politics.

The Dōjō hōshi story can be seen as beginning with a presentation of the early struggles of Buddhism, and ending with its ultimate success. The same process of gradual acceptance and development of Buddhism is mirrored in the story of Dōjō hōshi's slow but steady rise in the Buddhist temple. As a youth, the thunder child already possesses Herculean strength and defeats a prince who is known for his great strength at the capital, although the stone-throwing contest was done in secrecy at night. Here we see that Dōjō hōshi, though sure of his own strength, does not possess the courage or social status necessary to publicly challenge a prince in broad daylight. However, later, as an acolyte, he openly challenges imperial authority by irrigating the fields of Gangōji with water that had been purposefully cut off by the princes. Their action of repeatedly cutting off the water supply for the fields of the temple depicts the opposition of some members of the imperial clan to Buddhism, as well as the tension produced by imperial authority encroaching on a temple estate. The tale thus captures the social reality of the time. However, despite the attempts by some members of the ruling élites to thwart the Buddhist efforts, the story tells us of a mere Buddhist servant who is able to subvert state power through his supernatural strength, celebrating the triumph of Buddhism over imperial authority.

Another force of opposition that the new religion had to contend with was the cult of local deities. The *Konjaku monogatarishū* ("Tales of Times Now Past") gives an account of the conflict surrounding the construction of the

31 Abe Yasurō (1995), p. 147. *Nihon shoki* gives her dates as 593–629. Even though Suiko Tennō was an empress, her figure brings to mind the Buddhist ideal of the *cakravartin* (wheel-turning monarch) and the Confucian ideal of the "Son of Heaven." For a discussion of such ideals see John Strong (1983) and Herrlee G. Creel (1953).

32 Abe Yasurō (1995), pp. 151–2. For a discussion of the Buddhist world as centered on Mount Sumeru (Shumisen), see Okada Masahiko (1993).

33 Abe Yasurō (1995), pp. 151–2. See *Kojiki* (fasc. 3, no. 159) for an account of Emperor Yūryaku who held a banquet and a leaf from a *tsuki* tree fell in his cup. NKBT 1, pp. 401–4.

golden hall of Gangōji during the reign of Empress Suiko.[34] To begin with, there was a large zelkova tree at the construction site, which was thought to be the home of a local deity. As the result of the deity's interference, those who attempted to cut down the tree died. Eventually, a Buddhist monk discovered the secret for cutting down the tree. Thus, the successful construction of Gangōji on the site of a local kami home symbolized the transference of residency to the new Buddhist deities.

Outside of Gangōji, the conflict between Buddhist and local deities over the construction of Buddhist halls and temples and the resulting felling of sacred trees was equally intense. New construction often represented territorial battles, especially when the trees were believed to be sites for the descent or dwelling of kami.[35] For our purposes here, it is important to note that trees struck by lightning were viewed as sacred since they were perceived to be the residences of thunder gods. The cult of thunder gods is clearly connected with cults of sacred trees. There are many stories to illustrate the anger of local deities, often represented by thunder gods, as these sacred groves are brought under Buddhist control. For example, when Saichō attempted to construct a temple on Mount Hiei for the protection of the state, the local mountain deity, Shuten dōji, turned into a big cryptomeria tree to prevent Saichō's actions.[36] Nakano Takeshi summarizes the structure of such tales in the *Nihon shoki* as follows: (1) the felling of sacred trees, which are residences of thunder gods; (2) the anger of the thunder gods; (3) the performance of rituals of pacification, and (4) the success of felling trees and the escape of the manifested form of the thunder god.[37] Such a confrontation is illustrated by the following tale from the *Konjaku monogatarishū*.

A man in Echigo Province built a *stūpa* in order to offer it to the buddhas. However, just as he made his offering, the thunder struck and destroyed the *stūpa*. He made another one and as he made offerings, again, the thunder destroyed it. He tried once more, and as he prayed, a reciter of the *Lotus Sutra*, Shin'yū shōnin, appeared. The holy man offered to protect the *stūpa* with the strength of the *Lotus Sutra*. As he chanted the scripture in front of the *stūpa*, lightning struck and thunder roared. But this time, instead of the

34 *Konjaku monogatarishū*, fasc. 11, no. 22. See the discussion of this story in Kelsey (1981).

35 The felling of trees in territory belonging to the kami in order to construct Buddhist temples and Buddhist images stressed the conversion of local deities. According to Fabio Rambelli, this act represented the *honji suijaku* doctrine and practice at the material level: as sacred trees turned into buddha images and the residences of buddhas, the kami that resided in the trees also became the receptacles of Buddhism and animated icons of the living buddhas. Rambelli (2001b).

36 This account can be found in the Muromachi *otogizōshi* entitled "Ibuki dōji," in Ichiko Teiji *et al*. (eds.) (1989–92) vol. 1, pp. 186–213.

37 Nakano Takeshi (1967), p. 36. Another story about building an Amida image with a thunder tree can be found in *Konjaku monogatarishū*, fasc. 11, no. 31.

stūpa being destroyed, a youth of fifteen or sixteen with fearful features fell from the sky, all tied up from head to feet with ropes. The youth begged for forgiveness and said that he would not destroy the *stūpa* anymore. The youth was the thunder, and after being questioned as to the motives for his previous behavior he replied that he was merely responding to the request of his good friend, the local deity who lived there. The youth said that as the chanting of the *Lotus Sutra* began, he could no longer destroy the *stūpa*, and as he lost his footing and fell from the sky, ropes appeared from nowhere and tied him up. The holy man forgave him but made him open a water source among the rocks for the monks of the temple who had difficulty obtaining water. In addition, he asked the thunder child not to bring thunder or lightning within forty-five leagues in all directions of the temple.[38]

Here we see some themes common to the tale of Dōjō hōshi: the subjugation of thunder, making it work for Buddhism, the bringing of water to the temple, and the triumph of Buddhism over local deities.[39] In the following section we will see how the symbol of the thunder god underwent a transformation from disaster-causing deity to preventive (and protective) deity in society under the ancient Ritsuryō regime. We will also examine how the Buddhists sought to appropriate and build on this rich symbolism to create a new Buddhist thunder god.

The development of the thunder god

Japanese thunder gods appear to have been localized and scattered. Their traces can be found in the *Nihon shoki*, where many of them have the character for thunder (*ikazuchi*) in their names; in temple-shrine narratives (*engi*), where myths of thunder gods are preserved, recounting the manifestation of their power when hills were burned to create imperial tombs; and at local temples, where they are worshipped.[40] The thunder god often manifests itself in the form of a snake. In the *Nihon shoki*, for example, as we have already seen, when Chiisakobe no Sugaru went to seize the thunder he actually captured a great serpent.[41] The connection of thunder gods with snakes is also clear in the case of Dōjō hōshi, the promised child sent by the thunder god, who was born with a snake coiled twice around his head, and with the snake's head and tail hanging down his back.

In the *Nihon shoki* and *Kojiki* thunder gods are seen as fierce and uncontrollable figures who are nevertheless subject to the command of the

38 *Konjaku monogatarishū*, fasc. 12, no. 1.

39 Nakano Takeshi, in fact, says that thunder gods did not have much time to develop in Japan before they were absorbed by Buddhism. See Nakano Takeshi (1967), (1971), (1994), (1995).

40 Nakano (1994).

41 Aston, trans. (1972), vol. 1, p. 347.

emperor.[42] We might recall the tale of Chiisakobe who was commanded to bring the thunder god to the emperor and compare it to the different account of the imperial subjugation of the thunder god in the *Nihon shoki*. For example, in the year 618, Kahabe no Ōmi was sent to Aki province to find ship timber. When he was about to cut what he thought was a good tree, a man appeared and told him that it was a thunder tree that must not be cut. His reply was, "Shall even the Thunder-god oppose imperial commands?" After making offerings he sent workmen to fell the tree. Although a great rain fell, followed by lightning and thunder, the thunder god could not harm them.[43]

Thunder gods in Japanese history seem to represent a collective concept rather than individualized gods. Ouwehand states that the word *ikazuchi* in *Nihon shoki* and *Kojiki* refers to dreadful, stern, awe-inspiring, and majestic spirits, conveying the meaning of *tremenda majestas*.[44] Similarly, Nakayama Tarō in *Raijin kenkyū* ("A Study of Thunder Gods"), explains the term *ikazuchi* as referring to an awe-inspiring and angry deity who falls to earth as a result of its anger and is therefore to be feared.[45] As is well known, ancient Japanese kami also have both a placid and a fierce side, since they possess both a *nigimitama* or peaceful spirit and an *aramitama* or violent spirit. In folk religion, thunder gods are regarded with fear and awe as *aragami* or *tatarigami* (gods of punishment or curse) or *kōjin* (turbulent gods) on the one hand, and they are respected and worshipped as gods of rain and agriculture on the other hand.[46] Thus, thunder gods are also Janus-faced figures, being both destroyers and creators.

Ouwehand points to the fact that in the *Nihon shoki* and *Kojiki*, deities related to thunder, lightning, fire, mountains, water, and rain also appear to be closely connected to natural catastrophes such as volcanic eruptions, tidal waves, and earthquakes.[47] Furthermore, such disaster-causing capacities are

42 On this point, see Aston, trans. (1972); Donald L. Philippi, trans. (1968); François Macé (1976); Alain Rocher (1997).

43 Aston, trans. (1972), vol. 2, p. 147.

44 Ouwehand (1964). *Kaminari* is the more modern term for thunder and is related to *naru kami* or "roaring kami"; this deity is also known as *raiden* and is believed to protect trees against lightning. It is represented as red, has a face of a devil with two claws on each foot, and a string of drums on his back. Jean Herbert (1967), p. 489. In one of the legends, the thunder is said to be fond of eating human navels, and this becomes a very popular idea during the Muromachi period. Later, it seems to lose its fierce nature and turns into a comical figure.

45 Nakayama Tarō (1930).

46 There were public and private ceremonies to pacify and get rid of thunder. The *Engi shiki* prescribes to make regular offerings to thunder gods, Naru ikazuchi no kami, the second and eleventh months during the festivals of four seasons. In the fourth month, there were ordinary festivals dedicated to the Three Kantoki Deities, the thunder gods, for averting calamities; in addition, there were also extraordinary festivals for these deities. See Felicia Bock (1970–2).

47 Ouwehand (1964), p. 143 and Higo Kazuo (1984).

often combined into one deity, such as Karaijin ("fire-thunder deity") and Shutsugen Kukō myōō, the apparition of the "Brilliant king who causes troubles and suffering."[48] The earthquake-causing catfish (*namazu*) in folk belief is also identified with the thunder god.[49] It seems that thunder gods were often envisioned as *aragami* and functioned as "scapegoat" deities in the sense that natural disasters were attributed or related to them in one way or another. Thunder gods also became associated with gods of plague and pestilence, as we will see below.

Such developments may be related to the Japanese beliefs regarding spirits during the Nara and Heian periods, which were influenced by a number of factors. These factors included Chinese ideas of the "orphaned soul" and the neglected or untimely dead, the Buddhist concept of "hungry ghosts," and the Ritsuryō state's notion of "demonic spirits" or *kijin*.[50] All these various strands come together in the fear and awe felt toward a special class of spirits, namely, the "august spirits" (*goryō*). The association of the thunder gods with *goryō* and the Buddhist attempts to control them provide a window to the different interests and powers at play here. Let us now turn to the complex strategies at work in the rise of the cult of *goryō* during the ninth and tenth centuries.

The Ritsuryō state was constantly threatened by famines, epidemics, and natural disasters which the government had to account for, owing to its adoption of the Confucian ideal that the emperor was the "Son of Heaven." The ruling regime had to deny the resulting correspondence between the moral state of the emperor and the well-being of the country. Rather than putting the blame for the ills of the world on the emperor, they were imputed to a group of evil spirits collectively known as *kijin* who were believed to linger in the world, e.g. ominous spirits such as ghosts, *tengu* (goblins), and particularly the souls of deceased persons who sought vengeance on the living (angry spirits or *onryō*).[51] Thus the emperor was absolved of all responsibility

48 Ouwehand (1964), p. 141.

49 Ibid., pp. 133–4.

50 First among the Chinese influences was the idea of ancestor worship, in which neglected dead or "orphaned souls" with no one to make offerings to them will cause misfortune to befall their family, and the belief that the spirits of those who have been unjustly killed or of those who died untimely deaths will linger in this world and seek revenge. For discussion of this issue see Daigan and Alicia Matsunaga (1974); Alvin P. Cohen (1979); Albert E. Dien (1987). This fear of the potential malevolence of the spirits of the dead appears already in the *Zuozhuan* of the third century BCE. Furthermore, the arrival of Buddhism in Japan introduced the notion of the "hungry ghost" or *preta*, originally an intermediate state before reincarnation according to one's karma, but later becoming one of the six paths of reincarnation. These hungry ghosts were believed to wander among the living seeking food, even though their "voluminous bellies can never be filled, because their mouths [or throats] are as narrow as a needle's eye." J. J. M. de Groot (1982). For discussions of hungry ghosts, see Carol and Charles Wong Stepanchuk (1991); Stephen Teiser (1986).

51 Abé (2000), pp. 317–18. Abé argues that the Ritsuryō state turned to Buddhism for crisis

for the calamities of the world by taking advantage of Japanese beliefs regarding evil spirits.

The cult of *goryō* may represent a development of the belief in *onryō*. According to Kuroda Toshio, whereas *onryō* were the individual spirits of those who died in unnatural or untimely circumstances and thus roamed this world creating havoc until placated (either by taking revenge on the wrong-doer or by acts of pacification by the living, e.g. exorcism, recitation of Buddhist scriptures and of the name of the Buddha Amida [*nenbutsu*]), *goryō* were the functional spirits of those who died of political intrigue and were believed to have transformed into epidemic or disaster-causing spirits.[52] The *goryō* were functional in the sense that they represented a deification of a function, i.e. they were appeased and worshipped in order to prevent disasters and epidemics that they purportedly had the potential of bringing on. Buddhist monks were called upon by the government to perform ceremonies known as *goryō-e* to placate these spirits, thus leading to their deification and enshrinement in *goryō* shrines.[53]

During the Nara and early Heian periods Buddhism played the role of the protector of the state (*chingo kokka*). This role was further emphasized by *kenmitsu* (exoteric-esoteric) institutions in the medieval period; esoteric rituals of exorcism (*gōbuku*), incantation (*kitō*), and pacification of spirits (*chinkon*), transformed dangerous spirits into "beneficent and heroic spirits."[54] Moreover, in its dealings with such spirits Buddhism assimilated the local spirit cults and gained the support of the common people, as evident in the performance of the *goryō-e*.[55]

management of *kijin*, since the Confucian principle of the rectification of names (which aimed at constructing the order of the world by the proper naming of things) would not solve the problem of their creation of calamities. Ibid., pp. 319–22.

52 Kuroda Toshio (1996b), p. 328. The amount of harm that could be caused by an evil spirit was believed to be directly proportional to the amount of power s/he had as a human being, in addition to the degree of injustice suffered at the time of death. For example, a commoner would be able to cause some damage locally in his or her family or town, whereas a minister or high-ranking aristocrat could create harm on a national scale.

53 According to the *Nihon sandai jitsuroku*, the first six sanctuaries to be erected were dedicated to those who lost their lives after being falsely accused of political intrigue: Kuroda Toshio (1996b), p. 324. At Gangōji's Injusha (shrine for local deities), between the end of the Nara and the beginning of the Heian periods, members of the imperial and aristocratic clans who died of political intrigue were worshipped as *goryō*. See Abe Yasurō (1995), p. 156. For further studies of the cult of *goryō*, see Shibata Minoru (ed.) (1984).

54 Kuroda Toshio (1996a). Later, by the fourteenth century, social unrest, epidemics, and calamities were imputed to *tengu*, rather than *onryō*. *Onryō*, in addition to being the government's scapegoats, also embodied the potential to trigger political activity among the masses. For example, the *goryō* of Sugawara no Michizane helped to instigate a rebellion. On the development of the *goryō* cult, see Borgen (1994) and Kuroda Toshio (1996b).

55 See Kuroda (1996a) and (1996b). The first *goryō-e*, as recorded in the *Sandai jitsuroku*, was held in 862 at the Shinsen'en, and combined esoteric rituals and popular performances, in a combination of esoteric incantation, sutra reading (*tendoku*), rituals of purification,

The turbulent characteristics represented by the *aramitama* of spirits that need to be appeased and transformed into *nigimitama* and the vengeful spirits that need to be placated and deified as *goryō*, brought together the ancient thunder cult with the *goryō* cult. For example, the transformation of vengeful spirits into protectors can be seen in Gozu Tennō who protects people against smallpox, *dōsojin* road deities who protect travelers, and Kitano Tenjin for everything related to water, fire, and thunder.[56]

The transformation of the *onryō* of the famous scholar Sugawara no Michizane (845–903), originally a frightening *karaijin*, into the benevolent Tenman Daijizai Tenjin worshipped by people, provides a good illustration of the association of thunder gods with vengeful spirits.[57] A series of calamities following Michizane's death in exile in Kyushu were attributed to his angry spirit taking revenge on his enemies: the crown prince died suddenly, the imperial palace was struck by lightning, several court officials who had overthrown him died of shock, and the indisposed emperor also passed away suddenly. Michizane was initially feared as an angry ghost and viewed as a thunder god or Raikō ("thunder lord"), then identified as Tenjin ("heavenly deity"), and after a series of revelations his spirit was enshrined at Kitano. Interestingly, even though oracles revealed that Michizane was the lord of

performance of shows, *sumō* wrestling, song and dance. This brings to mind the first Japanese exorcism performed by Ame no Uzume, where she danced to lure Amaterasu out of the cave in which the goddess was hiding: Shibata Minoru (1984), p. 241; Herbert Plutschow (1990), p. 206; Kuroda (1996b), p. 326. Laughter and sex were often used as ways to appease evil spirits. *Goryō-e* were conducted at the capital and spread to the outer provinces; it was also through them that Buddhist and local cultic practices merged and Buddhism reached all levels of society.

56 Yanagita (1990b), p. 113.

57 On this subject, see in particular Borgen (1994), pp. 308–36. On the topics of the divinization of Sugawara no Michizane's *onryō* and the relationship of *goryō* cults to Daijizaiten (Sk. Maheśvara), see Iyanaga Nobumi (1983a), pp. 761b–64a. As *raijin* and *onryō* became associated, we see the intertwining of the cult of the *Daihannyakyō* (*Mahāprajñāpāramitā sūtra*) with that of *goryō*. The *Daihannyakyō* was chanted to bring rain owing to the belief that since droughts were caused by *onryō*, if they were pacified, rain would fall: Tachibana Kyōdō (1984), p. 85. On the folklore side, thunder gods are also related to *goryō*. Yanagita gives the following tale as the beginning of *goryō* stories. In the *Hitachi fudoki*, Nukahime was visited by a stranger at night and she became pregnant, giving birth to a small snake, which only spoke with her after the sun went down. As the son grew older, guessing that it was the son of a god, she asked him to go to his father. The snake-child cried and said he would go only if he were accompanied by a boy. Since there were only his mother and his uncle, Nukahiko, his request was not granted, and upon leaving he became furious and killed his uncle with his lightning. Yanagita (1990b), pp. 99–100. Yanagita further relates the thunder god to *goryō* by citing the following tale in *Daianji engi*: "When the deposed empress was exiled in Yamato, she gave birth to the thunder god on a peak of a hill, which came to be known as *ubuya no mine* (the birth-house peak). This thunder child, having grown, learned of his mother being sent into exile by his uncle. Becoming furious, he killed people one by one and became the thunder, ascending to heaven and spreading disaster throughout the country." Ibid., pp. 102–3.

thunder gods, people considered him, initially at least, essentially a thunder god.[58] By the tenth century, upon the successful pacification of his spirit by the court by means of esoteric Buddhist rites, he became the patron saint of literature. Later he came to be viewed as an avatar of Kannon (Avalokiteśvara) through *honji suijaku* associations.[59]

During the Heian period, *goryō*, gods of pestilence or epidemics (*ekijin*), and thunder gods (*raijin*) were gradually conflated in popular mentalities and religious practices, and became scapegoats: they were deemed responsible for the ills of the world and thus were considered to be endowed with preventive power.[60] In many rituals, in fact, the *goryō* or pestilence deity (*ekijin*) was sent down a river in the form of a portable shrine (*mikoshi*), as a way to send misfortune away from the human realm. At the same time, gods excluded in this way were believed to bring good fortune from the faraway place to which they had been exiled. These gods, then, functioned as intermediaries between this and the "other" realms. They protected and maintained borders by exporting impurities and other undesirables and by importing wealth and other desirables. It is not surprising, then, that gods of pestilence were also gods of the crossroads (*sae no kami*), preventive deities who protected village boundaries.[61] These deities later merged with some gods of good fortune (*sai no kami*), becoming gods of sexuality and fertility. They came to be called *dōsojin*, whose phallic symbolism represented their power to prevent harm and increase fecundity. In Izu peninsula there was the belief that in October, the "month without gods" (*kannazuki*) when all good kami gather in Izumo, deities of pestilence would select people upon whom to inflict sickness or misfortune.[62] In this case it was the *dōsojin* guarding the village from the

58 Borgen (1994), pp. 315–21. One such revelation was given by Dōken, who passed away after fasting and praying for twenty-one days in a cave and was later returned to life. A monk greeted him and escorted him to heaven, where he met Śākyamuni, who assumed the form of bodhisattva Zaō, the god of Mount Kinpu. Dōken was also introduced to Nihon Daijō Itokuten, or Michizane, who revealed that initially he had been filled with anger and had planned to destroy Japan, but changed his mind after esoteric Buddhism had calmed his wrath by one-tenth and thus he no longer intended to do great harm. Dōken told him that in Japan everyone knew him as Karai Tenjin (Fire and Thunder Heavenly Deity) and revered him as they did the Buddha. However, Michizane retorted by saying that Karai Tenjin was only his messenger number three: Borgen (1994), p. 318.

59 On the Tenjin cult, see also the introduction and Iyanaga's chapter in this book.

60 Such transformation of creators of obstacles into preventive and protective deities brings to mind the case of Vināyaka or Ganeśa, the creator and vanquisher of "obstacles," who became a protector god and a god of fortune. I am indebted to Iyanaga Nobumi for this point. For further discussion of this issue, see Rolf A. Stein (1991). For discussion of this issue in the Japanese context, see, for example, Shibata Minoru (1984); Higo Kazuo (1984); Tachibana Yasutaka (1984); Nakano Takeshi (1994); and Herbert Plutschow (1996).

61 Nakayama Tarō (1930), pp. 33–4. For the discussion of the apotropaic function of sexuality, see Michael Czaja (1974), pp. 45–50; Bernard Faure (1998); Abe Yasurō (1998), pp. 281–2.

62 Czaja (1974), p. 49.

crossroads who served as intermediaries, negotiating with the deities of pestilence as to which person in the village was to be targeted by disease.[63] Thunder gods were also part of this complicated amalgam. For example, people would pray to the *sai no kami* for sunshine during thunderstorms, whereas they would parade phallic symbols around the village during droughts asking for rain. Women who married late would pray to the thunder mallet, another phallic symbol, asking to bear children.[64]

It is thus possible to see some forms of continuity connecting gods of boundaries (*sae no kami*), gods of good fortune (*sai no kami*), gods of crossroads (*dōsojin*), gods of pestilence (*ekijin*), *goryō*, and thunder gods. These multiple associations are important to understand the Buddhist adoption of thunder gods as guardians of boundaries. The Buddhist transformation, through specific rituals, of dangerous and liminal deities such as the *goryō*, and the thunder gods in particular, illustrates the transformation of local spirits into Buddhist sacred entities. The Buddhist appropriation of thunder gods, in our case symbolized by Dōjō hōshi – water and agricultural deities of the common people connected to fertility, birth, and regeneration – represents on a mythological level the conversion of the Japanese people to Buddhism. Let us now turn to the Buddhist image of thunder gods and see how through the new Buddhist discourse various tensions, conflicts, and interests were negotiated.

Buddhist themes

Angry deities as Dharma-protectors

Buddhists were able to transform turbulent thunder gods from destroyers into protectors in the form of guardian deities (*gohōshin*). Even though these new gods were seen as benevolent, they were not fully tamed and never lost their turbulent nature. In fact, it was precisely their ambivalent nature and violent potential that the Buddhists preserved, harnessed, and then put into service for their own ends. While they no longer created havoc, these guardian deities used their turbulent energy to punish the enemies of the Dharma.

The identification of former *goryō*, gods of crossroads, and gods of good fortune illustrates the dual nature of such guardian deities, who were involved both with other-worldly and this-worldly matters. As *gohōshin*, they protected the Buddhist Dharma from its enemies and delivered punishments; at the same time, they also acted as benevolent deities of happiness and prosperity (*fukutokujin*), rewarding believers and providing worldly benefits (*genze riyaku*).[65] In addition, by virtue of being located between the world of man and that of the buddhas and bodhisattvas as it was envisioned according to

63 Ibid.

64 Nakayama Tarō (1930), pp. 43–4.

65 Sekine Shun'ichi (1997), pp. 144–5.

contemporaneous Japanese Buddhist cosmology, they were effective intercessors between the two realms, protecting both realms from disturbances.[66]

Other guardian deities included *yakṣas*, who acted as servant spirits at the command of eminent monks. The *yakṣas*, while bestowing benefits such as healing illness and averting calamities, also eliminated impurities and inflicted punishments on those who stole temple property.[67] Similarly, the Four Heavenly Generals (Shitennō), who oversaw both thunder gods and *yakṣas*, granted happiness and prosperity to those who sincerely prayed to them, and punished those who were blasphemous. For instance, the *Nihon kanryōroku* gives the following story. An argument arose regarding the possession of implements belonging to the monks Seigo and Shōnei, and the latter, who was wrongly blamed, prayed to the Four Heavenly Generals. As lightning flashed, and hail and heavy rain began to fall, a thunder god (*hekirekijin*) appeared, trampling Seigo to death. The deity continued to reside in the monk quarters, causing calamities until he was moved to be worshipped at another location.[68] Here we can see how a thunder god under the command of the Four Heavenly Generals was used to deliver punishments.

After the Nara period, Gangōji's cult of the Four Heavenly Generals, along with that of *yakṣas*, spread widely and deeply into society, an indication of Gangōji's success in diffusing Buddhism while absorbing local cults of thunder gods.[69] Buddhism was employed by the *ritsuryō* state as the national defense agency responsible for combating and subduing evil spirits causing harm to the country. Buddhists in turn enlisted kami at different localities to serve as local law enforcement figures for handling such spirits. Here we can clearly see a hierarchy of power at play. These guardian deities were called upon to deal with spirits threatening the state but also with those who posed a danger to the religion. Thus they became protectors of the imperial law and of the Buddhist teachings.[70]

Let us now return to the protector of Gangōji, Dōjō hōshi. Through him, we can gain insight into a number of important issues, e.g. the roles of children in temples and, in particular, a type of servant spirit in child form, *gohō dōji*.

*Dōjō hōshi as a child (***dōji***): prototype/predecessor of* **gohō dōji**

The Dōjō hōshi tale brings to the surface the status of temple child-servants during the late classical and medieval periods.[71] In the tale, Dōjō hōshi is

66 For discussion of Japanese Buddhist cosmology, see Okada Masahiko (1993), (1997); and Nishimura Kōchō (1986), pp. 36–9.

67 Abe Yasurō (1995), pp. 159–60.

68 Abe Yasurō (1995), p. 159 and Nakano Takeshi (1967), p. 28.

69 Nakano Takeshi (1967), p. 30.

70 For a discussion of the mechanisms of divine punishments, see Satō Hiroo's chapter in this book, and Rambelli (2002).

71 See Abe (1995), p. 155. For discussions of children in temples, see Kuroda Hideo (1987); Itō Kiyoo (1998); Tsuchiya Megumi (1992); Abe Yasurō (1993) and (1995); Leupp (1995);

seen as a type of *dōdōji* (temple hall child) attached to temple-shrine complexes. *Dōdōji* are to be distinguished from other types of "children" in these temple-shrine complexes, namely, novices and acolytes (*chigo*), who were trained in the arts (*geinō*) and were often companions to monks.[72] In contrast to the skilled workers comprised of acolytes and novices, the hall children were unskilled menial workers.[73] They held an ambivalent position in the temple-shrine complexes: whereas they handled and disposed of impurities, they were also in contact with the sacred, being in charge of offerings and assisting in rituals.

Abe Yasurō suggests that Dōjō hōshi, as a man of great strength (*chikarabito*) employed by Gangōji, was "living like a *sumō* wrestler."[74] Thus, he was like a bouncer who gets rid of nuisances from an exclusive establishment. The first undesirable ejected by him was an ogre who killed acolytes in the bell hall. This ogre was said to have formerly been a temple slave who was punished and therefore bore a grudge against the temple. This story thus exposes the internal conflicts that must have been present in religious establishments. In particular, the conflict between young acolytes and adult monks can be further illustrated by the following account from the *Ribuōki* ("Record of Ribuō"). An acolyte at Gangōji named Ago was bypassed for ordination many times, despite the fact that he passed the sutra exams. His anger built up and one day he went to the mountains and upon relinquishing his mortal body, he transformed into a dragon. One day his teacher went to this mountain and was attacked by the dragon. In defense, the monk prayed and the rocks crumbled, burying the dragon underground. Later, however, this dragon was able to become a buddha after worshipping the *Lotus Sutra*.[75]

Dōjō hōshi was able to escape the fate of a temple serf after earning merit for expelling the ogre, finally putting to rest these potential internal tensions that could have affected him as well. Another view on the identity of the ogre is proposed by W. Michael Kelsey and Moriya Toshihiko.[76] They argue that the ogre was actually a local deity who resented having his territory invaded by the Buddhists. Since he opposed and obstructed the construction of Gangōji, he was expelled. The deity was especially offended by the temple bell and this led him to kill acolytes who struck it. Under this interpretation, it is particularly significant that a converted thunder child, who now works for Buddhism, expels an antagonistic local deity who has not yet been converted to Buddhism.

Nakano Chizuru (1984); Faure (1998); Lin (2001), esp. ch. 4 "Worldly and Other-Worldly Servants: Children in Medieval Japanese Temples."

72 See Itō (1998).

73 See Nakano Takeshi (1994).

74 Abe Yasurō (1995), p. 155.

75 Ibid., p. 157.

76 Kelsey (1981), p. 91 and Moriya Toshihiko (1978), p. 166.

Owing to Dōjō hōshi's act in defense of Gangōji, he acquired the status of a free man and became a lay practitioner (*ubasoku*). He was then able to rise in the ranks at the temple to the status of monk after he defeated the external threat of the imperial princes, who had cut off the temple's water supply. He stood above all those at the temple who dared not oppose the princes by taking direct measures to counter their actions and to restore the flow of water to the temple, thus rescuing the temple from its critical inability to irrigate its rice fields. Dōjō hōshi's exceptional status was derived from his supernatural strength and also his divine origin as a thunder child. His triumph in protecting the water rights of the temple is perhaps also indicative of his power over water as the son of a thunder god. He is able to protect the temple from harm caused by local deities, demons, and imperial princes. As an extraordinary and supernatural child, he did not have to live the life of an ordinary acolyte as a temple slave. However, his role at Gangōji remained that of a servant who cleansed the temple of impurities and undesirable elements, which is analogous to the role of Dharma-protectors, who included lower deities such as the thunder god. Dōjō hōshi's role in cleansing pollution (*kegare*) tied in with his ability to control water at Gangōji. As a thunder child he was in charge of water, and water is often the purifying agent of pollutants. As an acolyte, he was a trickster figure, who had a fierce and mischievous side in performing his job, such as tearing the hair off the ogre's head and secretly challenging an imperial prince in a stone-throwing contest in order to attest to his own strength. Perhaps he can be seen as the predecessor or the prototype of *gohō dōji*, guardian spirits who are the attendants of powerful esoteric deities or personally attached to priests and hermits who have acquired power through the practice of austerities. *Gohō dōji* also remove obstacles from the practices of monks, monitor their undertakings, guard them from excessive austerities, serve as mediums for exorcism, and may even act contrary to the spirit of the Dharma in obedience to their masters.[77] Dōjō hōshi is a temple-hall child (*dōdōji*) who confines and dispatches undesirable entities (such as an ogre) and brings in desirable things (such as water), suggesting a boundary deity who is both a Dharma-protector (*gohōshin*) and a deity of prosperity (*fukutokujin*). The low position of this cultural hero in the Buddhist family reflects social reality at the temple and is characteristic of folk tales depicting the limits of social mobility.[78] Dōjō hōshi can rise in the ranks of the temple owing to his great strength and prodigious feats; however, he hits a glass ceiling, which even his thunder cannot shatter, because of his origins as the son of a kami.

77 For discussion of *gohō dōji*, see, for example, Komatsu Kazuhiko (1994); Nakano Chizuru (1984); Carmen Blacker (1963); Lin (2001), esp. ch. 3 "Child Servant Spirits: Gohō dōji."

78 See Jack Zipes (1979), p. 5.

Concluding remarks

The tales relating to Dōjō hōshi represent an early Buddhist discourse of proselytization in Japan, purposefully adopting, combining, and mapping multiple motifs and symbols from the rich repository of local myths and folktales into the Buddhist sphere. Casting a thunder child with supernatural strength as the protagonist, a familiar figure representing a wonder-boy who grows up to be a cultural hero, a heaven-sent little child (*chiisako*), a head of a clan, and a representative local deity of the people, makes his acceptance by the common people as a Buddhist hero easier and more meaningful.

The stories discussed here further added Buddhist concerns and themes such as the subjugation and the assimilation to Buddhism of the cult of thunder gods, followed by other cults, such as those of *yakṣas* and the Four Heavenly Generals, making the kami into the protectors and servants of the Dharma. This represented a powerful means of spreading Buddhism. Selecting the symbol of the thunder child is particularly significant in that the relation of Buddhism to local cults during the medieval period seemed to be one between parent and child or between master and servant. The turbulent spirit of both "the child" and "the kami" needs to be controlled, taken into custody, and put to good use. In addition, the tale of Dōjō hōshi further illustrates the superiority of the new religion not only over local forces, but also over state authority. Even though Buddhism served to further the interests of the Ritsuryō state, and vice versa, when it came to an ultimate showdown of forces, as represented on the mythological level by these stories, Buddhism came out stronger. Buddhism in other words, would not even think to bow to kami, not to mention their children.

3

THE SOURCE OF ORACULAR SPEECH: ABSENCE? PRESENCE? OR PLAIN TREACHERY?

The case of *Hachiman Usa-gū gotakusenshū*

Allan Grapard

> What does follow is that we can say the following words here without contradicting ourselves:
> "The truth is that truth varies."
>
> Paul Veyne[1]

In this chapter I wish to address a number of issues concerning the nature of oracular pronouncements in the Hachiman cult. The focus of my investigation is a fourteenth century document, the title of which – *Hachiman Usa-gū gotakusenshū* – I choose to translate as "Compendium of Oracles Proffered by Hachiman at the Usa Sanctuary."[2] It is quite a remarkable text and, as we will see, the very structure of its organization compels one to see in time and space the key settings for the production of oracular speech – and its interpretation. The original questions presenting themselves when confronting oracular pronouncements are not easy ones: Whence does this special kind of speech, so foreign to us in its style, come from? What kind of speech, precisely, is it? And what kind of intentionality does an oracle represent? I am sure that the answer to these questions cannot be yielded by a single presentation on a single document. Perhaps, however, it is possible to raise some initial queries concerning the absence of the speaker and the presence of the interpreter, and the nature of the relation between text and commentary.

1 Veyne (1988), p. 118.
2 The version used here is Shigematsu (1986).

The author of *Hachiman Usa-gū gotakusenshū*

Born in the Ōga sacerdotal house (one of the three main sacerdotal houses of Usa, together with the Usa and Karashima houses), Jin'un (1231–1314) did not become a sacerdotal officiant of the Usa Hachiman Shrine. Instead, he became a Buddhist monk. In contemporary Japanese scholarly works he is usually referred to as having been a *shasō*, "shrine-monk." He in fact had a long and distinguished career, eventually becoming the leading scholar monk (*gakutō*) of the Mirokuji, the sprawling set of temples governing Usa's shrine-temple complex.

It will be recalled that prior to their defeat at Dan no Ura in 1185, the Taira had stayed in the Usa area, and that the political support of the Usa sacerdotal house allowed them to "borrow" the Usa shrine-temple complex as an imperial residence for the infant emperor Antoku. On the 6th day of the 7th month of 1184, however, the warrior Ogata Koreyoshi and his brother Koretaka levied an army and attacked the site of cult. They reduced it to ashes, causing in the country as much consternation and lament as when, four years earlier, the Taira had reduced the Tōdaiji to cinders. The destruction was apparently so complete that Nakano Hatayoshi, the authority on the Hachiman cult, goes so far as to say that the history of Usa after 1184 is that of its slow reconstruction. Jin'un planned to play a central part in that process with his compilation of the Compendium, for he realized that mytho-history was the symbolic key to gathering the material goods necessary to both the reconstruction of the site of cult and the recovery and maintenance of its landholdings. Furthermore, the first Mongol invasion, in 1274, stirred many a feeling in Kyushu and elsewhere, but it certainly caused strong, if not virulent, reactions in the leading centers of the Hachiman cult. It is indeed in documents of this cult that one encounters the strongest xenophobic statements of the medieval period, and many Hachiman sites of cult claimed that their divine entity was the cause of the *kamikaze* that ultimately destroyed the Mongol fleet.[3] There is no doubt that the invasions caused Jin'un to reconsider the direction of history and the nature of the relations between Hachiman, the imperial state, and the warriors' power. Indeed, the last two of the sixteen scrolls of the Compendium are dedicated to the role of Hachiman as supernatural protector of Japan's territory.

A great many historical records and documents had disappeared in the 1184 disaster, and Jin'un decided to gather all available documents from various Hachiman sites of cult in Kyushu and elsewhere in order to organize them and reconstruct the "history" of Usa. In his introduction to the Compendium, he notes that he spent two decades gathering these documents, and that he began writing on the 2nd day of the 10th month of 1290, at the

3 The most important documents are the two versions of the *Hachiman gudōkin*, to be dated, respectively, between 1308 and 1317 and between 1301 and 1304, but there are many others. See NST, vol. 20, pp. 169–205 and 207–73.

age of fifty-nine. He laid his brush down around the 8th month of 1313, and passed away the following year, on the 20th day of the 5th month, at the ripe old age of eighty-two. The Compendium is thus the result of almost a half-century of research and writing; it deserves a full analysis that cannot be conducted in this brief chapter. Here, I will limit myself to a few preliminary observations.

Jin'un does not claim to be the author of the Usa Hachiman cultic site's history, for the source of the Compendium is, ostentibly and ostentatiously, a series of oracular pronouncements that would have been made by the Great Bodhisattva Hachiman itself. Jin'un acts as though he viewed his own role as no more than that of a human and frail commentator: in the Compendium, the *text* (= oracle) is made to appear as divine, and the *commentary* (= interpretation), merely human. Or should one posit, for the sake of discussion, the opposite – that the commentary's own relativity is politely posited as a subterfuge, to hide the fact that it uses its adoration of oracular speech only to guarantee the authenticity of its own interpretive outlook? As anyone might guess at this point, the issue to be dealt with is that of how Jin'un viewed "oracles," "truth," "interpretation," and "history." The old but crafty *shasō* is not going to help us very much, however, because he is smart and will try to mislead us with many a claim to truth.

Jin'un's understanding of Hachiman

Jin'un's understanding of Hachiman's identity was clearly colored by two different sources of existential concern. On the one hand, he was a major Buddhist prelate to whose mind Hachiman was a Great Kami *qua* Great Bodhisattva who could speak no lie; on the other hand, Jin'un was a descendant of Ōga no Higi, the old swordsmith to whom Hachiman would have manifested itself as a young boy standing on a bamboo branch. In other words, Jin'un had to present Hachiman as a bicephalic entity: as champion of the Mahāyāna truth system, and as guarantor of the Ōga sacerdotal house's claim to legitimacy in the Usa shrine-temple complex – and also, of course, of Jin'un's own claim to legitimate interpretation of Hachiman's oracles and history, these last two terms forming, in Jin'un's mind, an inseparable tandem. By this I mean to suggest that past oracles (speech utterances on the part of Another) were regarded as constitutive (or performative) elements of a "future" reality, subsequently confirmed by Jin'un's narrative of the "past."

Jin'un exposes his view of Hachiman's oracular speech in his introduction to the Compendium in the following way:

> The Great Bodhisattva Hachiman is the sacred figurehead of the 16th generation of human sovereigns ["Emperor" Ōjin]. When [the emperor's] precious age reached one hundred eleven years, He passed away. Having completed supernatural journeys to India and

> China, He broadly dispensed His virtue of compassion; manifesting Himself in various forms He performed multifarious miracles: shadow of a past emperor, but [to us] a divine radiance, He sheds light depending on the occasion and thus universally illuminates the world. Distinct from trees and plants though they are, separate from animals though they may be, humans are endowed with sapience, but they err nonetheless. What measure can be established, then, of [the error of] a fool?
>
> During the august reign of Emperor Kinmei there was a certain Ōga no Higi, who was no common man. Living as a mountain recluse, he concealed his whereabouts while revealing his appearance on the pathway to salvation. Subject to neither production nor destruction, he reached the age of more than five hundred years . . . [Hachiman] made a vow to protect the imperial line and show compassion for the people, he swore to give peace to this court and to pacify foreign regions. What do the words "protect the imperial line and show compassion for the people" mean? Only this: to progressively reveal [the nature of] enlightenment. What do the words "give peace to this court and pacify foreign regions" mean? Only this: to dispel errors one by one. Were it not so, what else could it be? The original sources (*honji*) are obscure and profound and manifest themselves this or that way, but the Buddha is just that: the Buddha. The body of essence is all-pervasive and manifests itself as all phenomena, but a kami spirit is just that: its spirit. [Therefore] one [must] surrender to the Buddha and to the kami, and, choosing a single path, pray for the present and the future. Walking on the ground of mystic realization, one expresses gratitude . . . On the Buddha level, preaching takes a form called "sutra"; on the Shinto level, it receives the name "oracle."[4] A buddha shows his form while teaching, but a kami remains without formal aspect while speaking . . .
>
> Jin'un was born in the twenty-first generation after Higi, and studied under the twenty-eighth generation of the Buddha's disciples.[5]

As this passage indicates, for Jin'un the relation between a buddha (as *honji*) and a kami (as *suijaku*) determines the relation between a sutra and an oracle, and is further characterized by the site of issuance of speech: the visible world in the case of the Buddha, the invisible world in the case of the kami. In terms of authority, an oracle (the true words of a kami) is equivalent to a sutra (the true words of a buddha), although there is a significant distinction: one cannot question the veracity of a sutra, but one can question an oracle,

4 The term used is *takusen* 託宣, but Jin'un sometimes uses the more restrictive *jindō no kyomei* 神道之教命.

5 Shigematsu (1986), pp. 114–15.

and this has to do with political authority. Whereas the emperor does not question the contents of a sutra, he can question an oracle's truth, and decide to doubt it (Chūai – Ōjin's father – did so but died as a result), or decide to countercheck, in which case what is doubted is not the oracle itself, but the interpreter. Let us take one concrete example which, pointedly, involves both a sacerdotal officiant and a Buddhist prelate.

Jin'un addresses this issue in the instance of Wake no Kiyomaro, who had been sent by the court to Usa in order to countercheck the oracle that would have recommended Dōkyō as Japan's Dharma-king.[6] Emperor Shōmu passed away in 756, and Empress Kōken abdicated in 758 in favor of Emperor Junnin (733–65), who left Kōken a large amount of power which she increasingly shared with her personal counselor, the Hossō monk Dōkyō (fl. 772). Fujiwara no Nakamaro was extremely hostile to Dōkyō, who saw the danger and exiled him in 764. Nakamaro rebelled, probably with Emperor Junnin's assent, but he was killed. As a result, Junnin was exiled to Awaji, while the ex-empress Kōken reascended the throne under the name Shōtoku and delegated ever more power to the Hossō monk. The relations between the court and Buddhism, and between the Fujiwara house and the members of the Hossō Buddhist branch it promoted, were reaching a critical level. In both cases Yahata (Hachiman) took a stand right between these groups.

Indeed, five years later the court shook on its foundations when Dōkyō claimed that "Yahata" had instructed in an oracle that he should become the Buddhist "king" of Japan. Shocked by this claim, courtiers supporting the imperial line sent to Usa one of their trusted members, Wake no Kiyomaro (733–99), with the mission to check the authenticity of the oracle. At Usa, Kiyomaro received an oracle to the effect that Dōkyō was an impostor:

> Ever since the creation of this land [the distinction between] ruler and subject has been clearly defined. It has never happened that a subject becomes a ruler. Only the imperial line is entitled to rule. He who ignores the Way must be quickly removed.[7]

Dōkyō was subsequently exiled to a distant site in the opposite direction of Kyushu, and he died there three years later, while Empress Shōtoku died in 770. This event – if it ever happened as reported – marks the rise of the entities enshrined in Usa to a high level in the emerging imperial cultic system, for the simple reason that the famed oracle legitimated imperial political power while denying Hossō monks the possibility of forming a Buddhist theocracy in Japan. Conversely, the oracle may also have marked a low point, for the equally simple reason that some courtiers, or competing sacerdotal

6 The following couple of pages are excerpted from my *The Religion of Space and the Place of Religion* (forthcoming).

7 Shigematsu (1986), p. 264.

officiants, may have suggested that the Ōga sacerdotal officiants fraudulently claimed to have received oracles of potent political consequences – a matter examined below.

The oracular pronouncements attributed to the Usa entities played a pivotal role in the constitution of the relations between policy-making functions and sacerdotal functions in the early stages of the imperial court's cultic system. These relations were, is it necessary to say, of a competitive nature. Much is known about the policy-making functions, institutions, and history of eighth-century Japan, but we know a lot less about sacerdotal functions in general, and oracular activity in particular. Ross Bender wrote that "unfortunately, nothing is known of the details of the Usa medium's trances and pronouncements, whether, like the Pythia at Delphi, she chewed laurel leaves or prophesied while seated on a tripod. It is apparent, however, that the Kanzukasa (in this case Ōmiwa [i.e. Ōga] Tamaro) served as an interpreter of the words of the medium (Ōmiwa [Ōga] Morime) and hence had a great power over these pronouncements."[8]

It is important to attempt to gain some insights into this problem, which will be presented below as a question involving space and time; but first of all, we must consider the status of women in shrines. There is little information on women of the eighth century, and even less on women of areas so distant as Kyushu. The role of empresses in succession disputes as well as the presence of an empress on the throne at the time notwithstanding, the realm of politics was becoming a predominantly male social space. In the geographical regions that were being established as "peripheral" with regard to the Yamato political center, however, some political decisions appear to have been the result of oracular activity on the part of women, a feature often recorded in historical documents.[9] The Usa cult, particularly in the early stages of its elaboration of Yahata as the deified form of King Homuda ("Emperor" Ōjin) in the late eighth or early ninth century, is a case in point, in that a particular configuration of the cult came to include Yahata's mother, identified as Okinaga Tarashi-hime in the *Kojiki*, *Nihon shoki*, and *Fudoki* records. In these records, she is described as a shaman-like figure who spoke the will of kami. It is clear enough that neither *Kojiki* nor *Nihon shoki* present reliable information about the fourth century (when the events related to the Homuda cycle might have happened), but they should to some extent be trusted concerning the view of sacerdotal women held at the time of their conception, in 712 and 720 respectively. Even though only *Nihon shoki* treats Tarashi-hime as an empress, both documents describe her as being seized in a trance and pronouncing an oracle; typically, oracles were interpreted by a male interpreting officiant (*saniwa*), and *Kojiki* informs us that the (legendary) "minister" Takeshiuchi no Sukune played this

8 Bender (1979), p. 136.
9 Umeda Yoshihiko (1964), pp. 339–42.

role.[10] *Nihon shoki* does not record the name of the interpreter, but tells us that upon Chūai's death his consort "discharged in person the office of priest."[11] By the time these chronicles were compiled by the imperial court in Yamato, it seems that the (Ōga?) female shrine officiant/nuns (*negini*) of Usa uttered pronouncements, and that once the Usa site of cult came to the attention of the court, these oracles were recorded and sent to the government in Heijō-kyō. This implies that, at the time, some women may have been regarded as able transmitters of the will of the kami, and that their messages were heard as directives concerning the future and as constitutive elements of a political realm expressed and legitimated in semiotic terms. In other words, these sacerdotal women occupied a social space recognized by the court (they were granted court ranks and were promoted when their pronouncements pleased the court); but they were also associated with a specific temporal orientation, the future. On the other hand, while male scribes and historians were predominantly engaged in the construction of the past as a narrative whose function was to legitimate the present, the male interpreters of oracles were directly concerned with a near future about which silences from the realm of the "unseen" were intolerable. These silences were broken by pronouncements issued as the outcome of possession, through a specific relation between divine entities and women, and they help reveal the source of a linguistically structured imperial power. Although there is a strong likelihood that "historical" narratives were geared toward formulating a prescription for the future, in the sense that they were made to support the legitimacy claims of the Yamato court, the will of kami representing large local or regional constituencies was held in awe, and direct access to that will gave some women a modicum of control over events – at least over those events that were submitted to oracular judgment. The arrival of Yahata in Heijō-kyō, however, signified that these women's oracular practice was becoming supremely political: in 754, two years after the completion of the Tōdaiji, the Ōga mediums mentioned above (who had officiated at the time of the installation of the Usa entities in the Tamukeyama shrine of the Tōdaiji) were accused, together with the Hossō monk Gyōshin, of engaging in "sorcery," and as a consequence they were stripped of their names and court ranks, and exiled. The position of "shrine-managing officials" (*kanzukasa*) was then taken away from the Ōga house and granted to the Usa house, which had been (re-)constituted by imperial decree in 721.

In 755 another oracle issued in Usa revealed that Yahata did not wish to keep the lands and households that had been granted earlier, because "fraudulent oracles were made in [its] name." With the exception of permanent shrine lands, the sacerdotal officiants of Usa returned those land parcels to the government. This event marked the rise (some say, the return to power)

10 Donald Philippi, trans. (1968), p. 257.

11 W. G. Aston, trans. (1972), Book 1, p. 225.

of the Usa sacerdotal house in Kyushu, and the exacerbation of a longstanding competition between the Usa and Ōga sacerdotal houses. The matter of the "Dōkyō incident," however, did not die away with the recognition that "fraudulent oracles" had been uttered in Yahata's name, or with the exile of all those who were deemed responsible at the time. Indeed, according to the ninth-century *Hachimangū Jōwa engi*, Yahata communicated in 755 an oracle informing of his "wish to be enshrined at Uwa Peak in Iyo Province and of [his] desire never to return to Usa, because a pollution had occurred."[12] A new sanctuary was then ordered and was completed in 766 at Ōoyama under the direction of Usa no Ikemori. According to Nakano, the pollution in question was the fact that Ōga no Morime and Tamaro had been accused of sorcery, as a result of which Morime was exiled to Hyūga Province (in eastern Kyushu), while Tamaro was exiled to Tanegashima, south of Kyushu. Tamaro was pardoned in 766, but he did not return to Usa at the time. In 767 a certain Nakatomi no Suge no Asomaro was appointed vice-governor of Buzen Province (the province in which Usa is located). It is the same Nakatomi no Asomaro – who earlier had abandoned his political position in Buzen and taken a position of sacerdotal authority at Dazaifu – who would have reported to the Yamato court the Usa oracle recommending that Dōkyō be the Dharma-king.[13]

According to Nakano, this means that Dōkyō knew of the historical and geographical relations between the Nakatomi and Usa sacerdotal houses in Kyushu, and that he used that knowledge in a skillful manner. The oracle of 769 would thus have been the event that visited disaster upon the Ōga house and marked the (temporary) victory of the Usa house. When Empress Shōtoku died in 770, Emperor Kōnin ascended the throne; he forthwith exiled Dōkyō to Shimotsuke Province, and Nakatomi no Asomaro to Tanegashima. He then recalled Wake no Kiyomaro from exile and appointed him Protector (*kami*) of Buzen Province. The following year, Wake no Kiyomaro petitioned the governor of Dazaifu to send three inspectors and three Urabe diviners to Usa, so that they may countercheck several of the "fraudulent oracles" said to have been fabricated by sacerdotal officiants of Usa, resulting in defamation of the court and troubles in the country.[14] Kiyomaro subsequently produced a report in which he indicated that five cases of fraudulent oracles were checked by Urabe diviners through the use of plastromancy (*kiboku*): two oracles were deemed to be fraudulent, and three to have been "true" oracular pronouncements. Usa no Ikemori claimed that the fraudulent oracles had been made by a Karashima female medium named Katsuyosome, but the government disagreed: Usa no Ikemori and Ōga no Katsuyosome were then relieved of their positions, and a certain Ōga no Okihime (then twelve years

12 The following is based on Nakano Hatayoshi (1975), vol. 1, pp. 176–83.

13 Aoki Kazuo *et al*. (eds) (1989) *Shoku Nihongi*, entry for Jingo Keiun 3 (769)/4/7.

14 Nakano (1975), p. 178; Shigematsu (1986), pp. 325–39.

old) was appointed to the position of *negi*, while a certain Karashima Tatsumaro (then forty-four years old) was appointed to the position of *hafuri*. In a stunning reversal, the government then appointed as head priest of the Usa sanctuary the disgraced Ōga no Tamaro, who was fifty-two at the time. After these events, but before Wake no Kiyomaro eventually returned to Yamato, Yahata caused five oracles to be recorded, all of which were about compassion, Buddhism, and relief from governmental duties.

Nakano remarks that the Fujiwara house was behind this gruesome competition between the sacerdotal houses, and that it was the Fujiwara who would have induced Nakatomi no Asomaro to record the "fraudulent" oracles, and thus put Dōkyō to the helm of the state – only to see the Usa house turn around and cause Dōkyō's fall at the same time it accused the Ōga house of wrongdoing. Had this been the case, though, wouldn't one expect the Fujiwara to have come into some kind of trouble or under suspicion? Nothing in the extant records suggests the Fujiwara house's culpability. In any case, it is remarkable that a subsequent oracle remonstrates the sacerdotal houses of Usa, saying, "Henceforth, do not jostle for preeminence." Needless to say, little attention was paid to this warning.

It is clear that oracular pronouncements were political commodities, and that they were paid for with political blood. Under the increasing cultural power of Buddhism, however, oracles subsequently took on a gender-oriented coloration, in the sense that whatever political control women may have held came to be questioned. That this occurred precisely in the context of the Dōkyō incident is suggested by the following instance.

The oracle and its interpretation discussed below, contained in the eighth scroll of the *Gotakusenshū*, record a contestation of the trustworthiness of female mediums – a contestation that came dangerously close to doubting Yahata [Hachiman] itself:

> Empress Shōtoku, Jingo Keiun 3 (769), *tsuchi-no-to tori*, seventh month, eleventh day, hour of the snake [10:12 am]. At that time Wake no Kiyomaro *ason*, official of the Imperial Guard and holder of the junior fifth rank, paid the shrine a visit as a messenger of the Takano empress [Shōtoku]. He offered precious gifts to the kami but, as he was about to read the accompanying declaration [*senmyō*], an oracle of the Great Kami was pronounced: "I shall accept the precious offerings, since such is the imperial will. However, I do not wish to hear the declaration, since I already know that it concerns the officiant ['s role]." Kiyomaro said, "*Negi* [shrine officiant], you are a woman. I, Kiyomaro, am a man. [Therefore] I cannot lend credence to the oracles you transmit. Thinking upon the matter, I have not heard that the dragon-woman ever [was qualified to transmit] the teachings of the buddhas and the kami, even after she achieved Buddhahood while a woman." At this point the shrine officiant said,

> while folding hands and facing the shrine building, "August Kami, upon hearing Kiyomaro's declaration, I harbor great doubts. At the time the August Kami first assumed the appearances of a bodhisattva, of a monk, as well as that of a king of lands large and small in India, China, and Japan, the August Kami was served by four officiants, of whom I am a descendant. I have always served as a vehicle for the kami's pronouncements, and today is not the first time. Swiftly reveal your august appearance, and clearly state your answer to the imperial messenger." At that moment the shrine shook once on its foundations. A purple cloud suddenly spread over the shrine and the August Kami appeared, resplendent as the aura of the full moon. The radiance of its manifestation filled the shrine. Thereupon, Kiyomaro bent his head to the ground, folded his hands, and paid reverence to the manifestation. The kami's appearance was that of an exceedingly venerable monk. Its height was three *jō* [*c.* 9 m.]. Turning toward Kiyomaro it said, "Lord Kiyomaro, you do not trust my medium. Do you wish to be apprised of her credentials? I have chosen a female officiant whose rank corresponds to that of the *jushiki* esoteric unction."[15]
>
> Kiyomaro asked, "What is the rank you refer to as that of the *jushiki* esoteric unction?" The oracle said in answer, "This rank corresponds to the status achieved upon full awakening and the vision of truth. I am a metamorphic body of the Buddha Amida. You must accept the oracle. Furthermore, I have pledged that I would manifest myself in three bodily forms, which enable me to fully distinguish good from evil. These forms are those of a monk, of a layman, and of a woman. I refuse now to accept your declaration . . . From now on you must uphold the oracles uttered by the shrine officiant."[16]

Even though this document is obviously a later fabrication because of the Buddhist technical language it uses, it may be suggested that it reflects several changes that occurred in the social organization of the Usa Hachiman shrine-temple complex in the course of the Heian period. In the passage translated above, a "kami" dressed as a Buddhist monk is made to use Buddhist terminology in order to defend a female medium against accusations on the part of an imperial messenger, and this because the messenger had challenged the medium's authority on the basis of a misogynous aspect of Buddhist doctrine. While it is clear that this "oracle" is a late, perhaps medieval concoction, and

15 The *jushiki* unction (literally, "receiving the status") is the phase of the esoteric ordination ceremony (*denbō kanjō*) in which the status of *ajari*, or esoteric master, is bestowed upon the ordinand. This term was later reserved for imperial ordination rituals.

16 Shigematsu (1986), pp. 270–1.

that it was aimed at grounding the legitimacy of Wake no Kiyomaro's exposition of the presumed impropriety of Dōkyō's claim to the imperial throne, it indicates how Jin'un and perhaps others perceived the status of female mediums. Furthermore, oracular activity on the part of sacerdotal women in Usa ceased in 872,[17] a date by which the Mirokuji temple had come to dominate all affairs of the Usa shrine-temple complex, *and* when Buddhist monks claimed to receive oracles. Women were thus almost entirely removed from the oracular political stage, although some (particularly as partners of *yamabushi*) continued their practice on what has been called the "popular" level. Many young boys also served as mediums during the medieval period, and this was true in the Hachiman cult as well, be it in Usa or elsewhere. Needless to say, the next major oracle found in Jin'un's Compendium is that charging Dōkyō with usurping the imperial throne.

There is little question, then, that the Nara and Heian periods saw a competition between the Fujiwara house and Hossō monks, between particular court members and Buddhism, between males and females and their respective social spaces – and that this competition was set within the context of an opposition between central and peripheral spaces and between contending, gender-based sources of silence and speech, of absence and presence. The social spaces of policy-makers and sacerdotal specialists were carved out through intense competition regarding the right to make authoritative pronouncements.

The spatial architecture of oracular speech

Not much earlier than the events mentioned above, the authors of *Kojiki* had philosophized that beyond this world of appearances, that is, of things visible, there was a realm of concealed source of thought and action, a realm to be accessed *via* aural rather than visual perception. Needless to add, that realm was – unlike the visible world governed by rulers – the ken of sacerdotal specialists, whose function it was to cross the threshold and receive knowledge from a realm that can only be called hyperreal. Oracles naturally belong to the immense world of divination, which included many techniques and specialists – beginning with the deciphering of directional material fractures caused by fire in the contained "space" of turtle shells, and extending all the way to the divination of residential space (*fūsui*, Ch. *fengshui*). It is quite remarkable that a medieval prelate like Jin'un seems to have thought and acted according to this classical construct, and to have privileged as source of speech (ultimate authority) an invisible realm.

And so it is that the authors of *Kojiki* posited a correlation between the visible or presence, and the invisible or absence (of clear form). It may be hard to deny the presence of things seen; it is much harder, however, to deny

17 Nakano Hatayoshi, personal communication.

the presence of things not visible, such as those things that are merely remembered – or those things yet unseen, such as those that are imagined to form the future.[18] Therefore, the future was thought of as something issuing from speech: either (in the political order) as a decree, or (in the sacerdotal order) as an oracle.[19]

This alone, I think, should cause one to pause and consider the problem of absence and presence. The questions are: What caused speech to erupt as a complex set of relationships between the tongue, palate, vocal cords and so on? Was it the result of a desire yet unfulfilled – to transform a perceived absence into a satisfying presence? Was it the result of the perceived presence and comforting certainty, deep in oneself, of a divine murmur? Was it a dream?[20] Was it a violent and sudden irruption, an invasion by a kami or a bodhisattva?[21] Was it consciously caused through the use of certain techniques?[22] Why so many women and children as mouthpieces?[23] And, why, so often, in the context of inner or outer conflicts and contests, of existential anxiety?[24] The Compendium alone does not provide the answers, but we may begin clearing some of the ground.

18 This question has long been of tremendous interest in Buddhist circles: Does the past exist? Or does the future exist, but not the past? Or do all three exist or fail to do so?

19 This too was an old position in some Buddhist circles.

20 Dreams formed an important part of the phenomena subsumed under the single term *takusen*, and several are mentioned in the Compendium. They were also submitted to oneiromancy (*yume uranai*). Michel Foucault, in his brilliant analysis of Artemidoris' *The Key to Dreams*, writes that "Later, Synesios would represent a quite traditional viewpoint when he reminded [his audience] that our dreams constitute an oracle that 'lives with us', accompanies us 'in our travels, in war, in public functions, in agricultural labor, and in our commercial undertakings.' One must then consider a dream as 'an everready prophet, an indefatigable and silent giver of advice' " (Foucault, 1984, p. 18).

Dreams do not appear in the *jindaihen* of *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*, but are important in the records of the reigns of "Emperors" Jinmu, Sujin, and Suinin. They occupy a prominent place in *Man'yōshū*, and remain a feature of literary and religious works until the end of the Edo period. Interesting oneiro-critical treatises of the Edo period include *Muboku shūyō shinan* and quite a few others. Thereafter, Freud's impact is seen up to the 1960s, after which "new agey" or charlatan practices begin to propagate and create the astounding contemporary mishmash of oneiromancy, geomancy, palm reading, face line reading, blood type reading, and so on. I will add that I do not mean to demean these practices and practitioners, and that it is necessary to pay attention to the "reading" in all of the above. As Michel Foucault pointed out in his *The Order of Things* (Foucault, 1970), diviners are "readers of the obscure."

21 The cases of possession called *kamigakari* or *hyōi*.

22 In contemporary Japan the *yorimashi* of Mount Ontake and Hayama, for example, are spectacularly possessed at preset places and times.

23 On this issue see my discussion and bibliography in Grapard (1991), pp. 1–22.

24 Nakayama Miki, who founded Tenrikyō, is a case studied by Helen Hardacre (1994), pp. 137–66. More recently, cases of possession leading to the formation of new religious groups have been studied, in Okinawa by the Norwegian anthropologist Solrun Pulvers (in a filmed documentary whose title I forget), and in other parts of Japan, by Kawamura Kunimitsu (1997).

The *Hachiman Usa-gū gotakusenshū* consists of sixteen scrolls. Each scroll bears on its outer decoration the complete title of the Compendium, preceded by a single graph; when the scrolls are put side by side the top sixteen graphs read, from right to left, Hachiman's Bodhisattva name: *Go-koku-rei-gen-i-riki-jin-zū-dai-ji-zai-ō-bosatsu*, preceded by the two graphs meaning "My Name": 我名護国霊験威力神通大自在王菩薩. The locutionary quality of the work is thus prominently displayed, both vertically and horizontally.[25] Interestingly, though, spatial features dominate the entire organization of a work dedicated to speech and time. All scrolls focus on space, as becomes evident in the following list:

Scroll 1: On the August Origins and Rank
Scroll 2: On the Three Countries [India, China, Japan]
Scroll 3: On the August Peregrinations around Japan
Scroll 4: On the Three Sanctuaries and Others
Scroll 5: On the Sites Surrounding Hishigata Pond
Scroll 6: On the Ogura Hill Sanctuary (part one)
Scroll 7: On the Ogura Hill Sanctuary (part two)
Scroll 8: On the Ōo Sanctuary (part one)
Scroll 9: On the Ōo Sanctuary (part two)
Scroll 10: On the Ōo Sanctuary (part three)
Scroll 11: More on the Ogura Hill Sanctuary (part one)
Scroll 12: More on the Ogura Hill Sanctuary (part two)
Scroll 13: On the Wakamiya Sanctuary
Scroll 14: On Peak Maki (also called, "On Mount Omoto")
Scroll 15: On Subjugating Foreign Lands (part one)
Scroll 16: On Subjugating Foreign Lands (part two)

In other words, the production (and reproduction) of speech is organized on the basis of the place where, or about which, oracular speech occurred, and on the basis of Jin'un's faithful focus on the history of the Usa sites of cult. Indeed, this speech, be it oracular or interpretive, concerns territoriality over time: its sacred origins, its maintenance, and its envisioned future, on the level of India, China, and Japan; in Japan in particular, on the level of the various sacred sites making up Usa; and on the related levels of imperial control, warrior intrusions, and cultic integrity. The presence of the invisible but chatty deity manifested itself on the visible ground, where shrines dedicated to commemoration were placed – as many sites of cult as there were commemorative narratives.

25 After all, Jin'un was a Tendai prelate who knew the *Makashikan*, and the Sannō cult was widespread in northern Kyushu at the time. On horizontality and verticality see Grapard (1987), pp. 211–34. Examples of these games of verticality and horizontality abound between Kyushu (in the case of Mount Hiko as well as of Usa) and, as far as I can ascertain as of today, Nikkō in the Kantō area.

The "origins" of Hachiman are treated differently in the first three scrolls: in the first scroll they are treated on the basis of *Nihon shoki* and *Fusō ryakki*, as a matter of genealogy; in the second scroll, on the basis of international considerations, as a matter of status; and in the third scroll, on the basis of geographical origins, as a matter of territorial influence. The oracles begin in the third scroll, and they all concern place, as in the following opening lines:

> One. First, Utsu no Takashima in Karakuni.[26] In the 32nd year of the reign of the Emperor Amatsukuni Oshihiraki Hironiwa, while there was a supernatural occurrence on the Ōo Hill of Hishigata in the Usa district of Buzen Province, and as Ōga no Higi was uttering words of supplication, Yahata [Hachiman] manifested itself as a heavenly youth and spake:
>
> "As eight banners (*yahata*) came down from Heaven onto Karakuni no Shiro, I manifested myself as a kami in Japan. I will take all living beings under my care. I am a metamorphic body of the bodhisattva Śākyamuni" [note of the author: rest abridged].
>
> The first human emperor, Kamu-Yamato Iwarehiko no Mikoto, ascended to the Palace of Indra at the age of fourteen and took hold of the Seal and Key, and subsequently returned to Karakuni no Shiro in Japan. That place is called So'o no Mine, another name for Mount Kirishima . . .
>
> Personal note (*watakushi ni iwaku*): Karakuni no Shiro, located in Ōsumi Province, is the original site of manifestation of Emperor Ōjin's spirit. This is known because of an imperial proclamation. Ōsumi Hachiman is Hachiman in its manifestation as the son of the Chen Emperor Wu's daughter.[27] Thus we know that Hachiman manifests itself in distinct *suijaku* forms . . .
>
> Next, Mount Ibuki in Yamato Province.[28]
>
> Next, Nakusa Beach in Kii Province.
>
> Next, Kashima near Kibi no Miya.
>
> Next, Saba Yurado in Suō Province.
>
> These four sites are known from ancient documents. No oracular pronouncements yet.
>
> Next, Uwa District in Iyo Province.
>
> Next, a large stone by Nada Beach, located in the Aki District of the Kunisaki administrative villages (*gō*) in Bungo Province.
>
> Oracle, dated 8th day of the intercalary 10th month of the 1st year of Tempyō Jingo (765):

26 This is where Hachiman would have "appeared." Karakuni here does not refer to Korea or China, as it often does, but to the Kirishima region of Ōsumi Province in southern Kyushu.

27 On this see Grapard (1986), pp. 21–50 and Grapard (1989), pp. 159–89.

28 This may be an error, and refer to the famed Mount Ibuki in Ōmi Province.

> "In the distant past, as I proceeded from Uwa District in Iyo Province, there was a large stone offshore of Nada, in the Kunisaki administrative villages in Bungo Province, to which I proceeded in order to rest. This stone is therefore named the August Armrest Stone."[29]

And so the text walks the reader through the landscape. Much of the symbolic world of the Hachiman cult rests on oracles related to travel narratives bespeaking of territorial control, be it in the case of the famed travel from Usa to the Tōdaiji Tamuke Hachiman Shrine in 749, of the regular set of double travel in the Gyokō-e ritual, in the present case of Hachiman's geographical discovery and control, or in the subsequent warrior cults that were dedicated on battlefields.[30] The cult was, first and foremost, mapped onto the land. Here one recognizes a salient pattern already evident in the conquest narratives found in *Kojiki*, *Nihon shoki*, *Fudoki*, *Yamato-hime no mikoto seiki* and other texts, a pattern one might call without any apology to Caesar: "I came, I saw, and I named." Whether this privilege given to place is related to land domains, or to the union or gaps between actual administrative division and *perceived* union of land domains, is an issue that cannot be resolved at the present time, though it may be of some import.[31]

It is pertinent at this point to recall Kuroda Toshio's analysis of Mount Hiei's *kike* (the chroniclers of Mount Hiei's institutions' relation to the court). Kuroda wrote that the thought of these *kike* was grounded in a spatiality symbolized by the predominant organizational scheme of their existential reality, the *mandara*.[32] This mode of thinking, Kuroda argued, can be expressed as follows:

> Antithetic characteristics of these two trends (a group of writings concerning the sacred area of Mount Hiei, and a group of writings describing the origins and the history of Mount Hiei) can be noted; one could say that the texts belonging to the first trend are doctrinal and tend toward secrecy and mysticism, whereas those of the second tend toward fiction and historicism. Moreover, the first originate in *kimon* and end up in secret oral transmissions, are made up of poetry and formulas expressing the sacred and secret character of a mystical world, while the second originate in historical events (*koji*) and end

29 Shigematsu (1986), pp. 119–20.

30 On the Gyokō-e ritual see Grapard (1994a), pp. 335–52. This ritual travel, which took place every six years, originated in 765.

31 I mention this problem because, during the medieval period, Hachiman was made to preside as oracular judge over court cases concerning land domain issues of contestation. See Ōita Kenritsu Usa Fudoki no Oka Rekishi Minzoku Shiryōkan (ed.) (1981), p. 79.

32 Kuroda Toshio (1989), pp. 143–55. There is no doubt that Jin'un knew of their existence. See also Grapard (1998), pp. 55–69.

> in prosodic and episodic fabulations expressing the profane world and its legends and miraculous events . . . Generally speaking, the first trend indicates a logic that develops spatially, symbolically, and as a mandala. It is doctrinal, mystical, and secretive while tending to indicate the "essence" [*honji*]. The second trend evidences a logic that develops temporally, is descriptive, and partakes of the *engi* while tending to indicate the "hypostasis" [*suijaku*].[33]

One is thus dealing with a specific form of what Gaston Bachelard in 1958 named *topophilia*.[34] This term was introduced into human geography three years later by Yi-Fu Tuan and further refined by the latter in his 1974 book of the same name. We are also dealing with the related concept of *geopiety*, a term first used by the geographer John Kirkland Wright in 1966, subsequently refined by Yi-Fu Tuan, and used or misused by myself some twenty years later.[35] Innumerable are the place names related to Hachiman's cult, either in the Compendium or other medieval etiological records (*engi*), or simply in the sheer number of Hachiman shrines in Japan: more than 45,000. What dominates all references to these sites of cult, however, is a deep sense of place, a specific sense of territoriality couched in profoundly mystical terms, and "a poetic *rêverie* stimulated by affective ties to the elemental world and to emotionally charged places."[36] It is because the oracular cult dedicated to Hachiman concerned, first and foremost, imperial territoriality, that oracular speech emphasized space and place. One might add that territoriality is also, although perhaps only marginally, a matter of social space, since it is related to control over land and people on the part of the rulers.[37]

Furthermore, one is dealing with what Bender and Wellbery have called "chronotypes," defined as "models or patterns through which time assumes practical or conceptual significance."[38] Jin'un's Compendium deals both with sacred spaces and sacred times, all of which assume significance through the formulation of oracles.

In this context, I would like to refer to the notion that society is an imaginary institution, and that this imagination is turned into reality via speech, and especially so via divinatory and oracular speech, further reinforced (reenforced?) or balanced by proclamatory political speech. In classical and medieval Japan, these two forms of speech coexisted and absolutely needed each other, just as the institutions of Jingikan and Dajōkan (the Ministries of Kami Worship and the Ministry of State) were supposed to form the two wings that carried the imperium.

33 Kuroda Toshio (1989), p. 154.
34 Gaston Bachelard (1964), p. xxxi.
35 Grapard (1994b), pp. 372–401.
36 R. J. Johnston *et al*. (eds) (1994), pp. 227 and 633–4.
37 On the fact that human territoriality is different from animal territoriality and has its roots in religious control over land, see Sack (1986).
38 Bender and Wellbery (eds) (1991), p. 4.

On society as an imaginary institution, Cornelius Castoriadis writes: "The social imaginary or instituting society exists in and through the positing-creating of social imaginary significations and of the institution; of the institution as the 'presentification' of these significations, and of these significations as instituted."[39] Another proponent of the notion is a philosopher of language, John Searle. In his *Mind, Language and Society* Searle suggests (he would say, "demonstrates") that: "We cannot create a state of affairs by thinking it, but given our analysis of institutional reality in the previous chapter, we can see how it is possible to create institutional reality by way of the performative utterance. We can create a state of affairs by representing it as having been created."[40] In other words, oracles are typical performative utterances that are far superior to thinking, since they can create the institutional reality that will sustain the oracles' legitimacy (or establish their fraudulence).

It remains to be seen whether Searle's reliance on Austin's linguistics helps determine exactly which of the five "illocutionary points" resembles most the intentionality of an oracle. According to Searle, these illocutionary points are as follows. First, the *assertive* illocutionary point, which is to commit the hearer to the truth of the proposition: it is to present the proposition as representing a state of affairs in the world. Some examples are statements, descriptions, classifications, and explanations. Second, the *directive* illocutionary point, which is to try to get the hearer to behave in such a way as to make his behavior match the propositional content of the directive. Third, the *commissive* illocutionary point, which is a commitment by the speaker to undertake the course of action represented in the propositional content. Fourth, the *expressive* illocutionary point, which is simply to express the sincerity condition of the speech act. Fifth and last, the *declaration* illocutionary point, which is to bring about a change in the world by representing it as having changed.[41] I have not classified all oracular utterances of the Compendium on the basis of these five points, but it is clear that all five points are widely used and, by way of consequence, that oracular speech cannot be characterized separately from all other speech acts – aside from the claim regarding their hyperreal provenance. At this point it is proper to return to Castoriadis:

> Society is, therefore, always the self-institution of the social-historical. But this self-institution generally is not known as such (which has led people to believe that it cannot be known as such). The alienation of heteronomy of society is self-alienation; the concealment of the being of society as self-institution in its own eyes, covering over its essential temporality. *This self-alienation –*

39 Castoriadis (1987), p. 369.
40 Searle (1998), p. 151.
41 Ibid., pp. 148–50.

> sustained by the responses that have been supplied by history up to now to the requirements of psychical functioning, by the tendency proper to the institution, and by the practically incoercible domination of identitary logic-ontology – *is manifested in the social representation (itself instituted in each case) of an extra-social origin of the institution of society (an origin ascribed to supernatural beings, God, nature, reason, necessity, the laws of history or the being-thus of Being*).[42] [italics mine]

The italicized part of this quotation not only fits a "modern" interpretation of oracular speech, but also seems to fit the misrecognition that makes the understandings current in Jin'un's time possible at all. These understandings concern the belief, shared widely among aristocrats as well as commoners, in divine origins, in divine speech, in sacred grounds, and in exoteric (*ken*) and esoteric (*mitsu*) meanings, all serving as institutional pillars of society and history.

In conclusion, one may say that oracular speech depends either on presence or on absence – or on both, and that it cannot be understood separately from specific space and time models or patterns. Furthermore, it appears that it may sometimes be treated, by some authorities at the time, as plain treachery – and by other authorities, as divine and therefore unassailable, depending on whose political power and intentionality is expressed as "Thus Spake Hachiman."

42 Castoriadis (1987), p. 372.

4

WRATHFUL DEITIES AND SAVING DEITIES*

Satō Hiroo

What happened when Buddhism arrived in Japan, and met the Japanese kami? How did the two relate to each other, and what changes occurred in religious thought and practice? These problems have been addressed by many scholars, not only from a purely historical perspective, but also as a starting point for reflection on the adaptation of foreign cultural elements in Japan. Traditionally, this topic has been approached from a purely doctrinal or intellectual angle, and it has taken the form of tracing the development of the relation between the kami and Buddhism as a process of progressive amalgamation. From one historical period to another, this relation is commonly thought to have passed through the consecutive phases of kami-Buddhist amalgamation (*shinbutsu shūgō*), *honji suijaku*, and, finally, inverted *honji suijaku*.[1]

However, this perspective has prevented us from addressing some important problems. In what ways, for example, did kami and buddhas function side by side during different historical periods? The dominant diachronical approach needs to be supplemented with a synchronical analysis of the co-existence of kami and buddhas. In other words, it is necessary to analyse the system, or the cosmology, that allowed kami and buddhas to function side by side. In this chapter, I shall attempt to outline the systematic relationship between kami and Buddhist divinities in the medieval period, when the process of amalgamation is thought to have reached its final stage with the full development of the *honji suijaku* paradigm.

Before embarking on this task we must be aware of the limitations forced upon us by the available source material. We can hardly expect to find systematic records of the beliefs of common people of medieval Japan. Some intellectual thinkers have left us *exposées* of their cosmological explorations, but their ideas must by necessity have been different from the common

* This chapter was translated by Mark Teeuwen. The editors are grateful to the author for his permission to publish this essay in translation.

1 For overviews of the history of research into this topic, see Yamaori Tetsuo (1980) and Hayashi Jun (1984).

understanding of their age. Are there then no materials that may shed some light on the shared world-view of medieval Japanese across classes, and especially on their understanding of kami and their position within the Buddhist cosmos?

To pursue these questions, one could begin by looking at medieval oaths (*kishōmon*). *Kishōmon* are generally defined as documents in which the signatories call down upon themselves the wrath of kami and buddhas in case they fail to meet their commitments.[2] Their origin is not clear, but by the twelfth century the format of *kishōmon* had been standardised, and oaths of this type were used widely throughout the medieval period among all layers of the population, from aristocratic and warrior élites down to monks and commoners. This means that an analysis of the divinities invoked in these documents can provide a unique insight in the shared cosmology of the Japanese of the time. Although *kishōmon* have been studied by a number of scholars from the viewpoint of popular history and ideology,[3] they have as yet hardly been used to investigate the relationship between kami and Buddhist divinities. That is what I shall attempt in this chapter.

The different functions of kami and buddhas

One of the first things that strikes one when examining *kishōmon* is that in spite of the general understanding that they "invoke kami and buddhas," they actually feature very few buddhas and a great many kami. What might be the reason for this? Was there perhaps a division of tasks between kami and buddhas, in which the handing out of punishments was a function of the kami alone?

There are many medieval sources that could be adduced to support such a view. One is the story of Zaō Gongen's descent to Yoshino, as related in *Shasekishū* (1279–83):

> In antiquity, when En no Gyōja was practicing austerities on Mt. Yoshino and the form of Śākyamuni appeared before him, the ascetic said: "In this august form it will be difficult to convert the people of this country. You should conceal yourself." Then the shape of Maitreya appeared to him, but En said: "This likewise will not do." However, when the Buddha manifested the fearsome shape of Zaō Gongen, En responded, "Truly, this is one who can convert our land to Buddhism." And today the Buddha manifests this Trace.[4]

Shasekishū comments on this tale that the kami, as "fearsome" traces who "powerfully dispense rewards and punishments," are more likely to inspire faith in the Japanese than their originals, the "more moderate" buddhas.

2 Satō Shin'ichi (1971).

3 E.g. Kawane Yoshiyasu (1976); Chijiwa Itaru (1981); Irumada Nobuo (1986).

4 Morrell (1985), pp. 80–1; NKBT 85, pp. 66–7.

Similarly, the *Hosshinshū* (early Kamakura period) states that buddhas and bodhisattvas may take on the guise of kami (*kijin*) in order to save those who are born in an evil age and in a peripheral land – like the medieval Japanese. In the form of kami, the buddhas and bodhisattvas "lead armies of demons to protect the Buddhist Dharma, and dispense awards and punishments."[5] In other words, in far-off Japan, and in an age in which the Dharma had degenerated beyond hope (*mappō*), the buddhas would manifest themselves as kami because it is the kami who have the power to reward and punish. Using the kami as a kind of carrot and stick, the buddhas tried to lead the Japanese to the Dharma.

When we see the kami with these eyes, it also becomes easy to understand why in the same *Shasekishū*, the monk Jōganbō was terrified to have come into contact with impurity on his pilgrimage to Yoshino, and exclaimed: "While realizing the importance of strict ritual purity before the Manifest Traces, by acting as I have done I have incurred their divine retribution!"[6] A similar image of the kami emerges from *Kokawadera engi* (mid-thirteenth century), which reads: "It is true that the punishments of the traces, the kami, are severe, but what about the compassion [of the buddhas] that encompasses the whole world?"[7] Examples like these suggest that to the medieval Japanese, the kami were violent and merciless, while the buddhas were moderate and compassionate. Or, to put it differently, the kami punished the sentient beings, while the buddhas saved them.

It is not difficult to find other telling examples. One such is an anecdote from the medieval *sekkyōbushi* piece *Sanshō Dayū*, which has become famous through Mori Ōgai's adaptation. At some point in the story, the main hero Zushiōmaru escapes from his cruel master Sanshō Dayū, and flees to a temple. When the abbot of this temple claims that he does not know where Zushiōmaru is, his pursuers demand that the abbot swears an oath to prove that he is speaking the truth. The abbot lists more than 7,000 volumes of sutras, and swears that he is ready to subject himself to their divine punishment if he is lying. However, this does not satisfy Sanshō Dayū, who objects that "an oath that does not invoke the kami of Japan, great and small, is not a proper oath."[8] In other words, only the punishing power of the kami can make an oath binding.

A similar tale can be found in *Konjaku monogatarishū* (*c*. 1120–50). Once, the provincial governor of Yamato province requisitioned some timber that had been intended for reparations to the Yakushiji. Enraged, the Yakushiji monks immediately started a hundred-day lecturing session on the *Ninnōkyō* in front of the temple's tutelary shrine, which was dedicated to Hachiman.

5 *Shinchō Nihon koten shūsei* vol. *Hōjōki, Hosshinshū*, p. 382.
6 Morrell (1985), p. 82; NKBT 85, p. 68.
7 NST 20, p. 58.
8 *Sekkyōbushi*, p. 26.

As a result, we are told, the governor soon fell into the Yoshino river and drowned.[9] Here, too, it is the kami Hachiman who retaliated for an offence against Buddhism, not the temple's buddha Yakushi himself.

As a last example, let me cite the following oath, signed by a certain Prince Michisuke:

> I humbly declare in front of the Lord of Shingon Mahāvairocana, the assembled Honoured Ones of the Diamond Realm and the Womb Realm, and especially the Great Peacock King who is the Buddha Mother of past, present and future, the good Devas who protect the Dharma at the *monzeki* temple, and the six Great Masters who have transmitted the Dharma: . . . if my followers fail to fear the wisdom of the Buddhist Realm, break their commitments as set out in this oath, and take the scriptures and ritual implements [of this temple] elsewhere, they will cease to be my followers. The Vajradevas and other protective deities will swiftly punish them, and they will lose all blessings that they may have received in this life.[10]

Here Prince Michisuke sets out by invoking the buddhas and honoured ones of the mandalas as his witnesses; but when it comes to actually punishing future offenders, he calls upon the temple's "protective deities" (*gohō zenshin*).

All these various sources consistently assign the task of punishing the enemies of Buddhism to the kami or to Buddhist protective deities, and never to buddhas or bodhisattvas. These latter are expected to save the dead in the afterlife, not to retaliate against evil acts in this life. This was the task of the kami, who appeared as traces in remote, *mappō* Japan in order to exorcise evil. "Wrathful kami" versus "saving buddhas" emerges as a paradigm that recurs in a wide variety of sources throughout medieval Japan.

The buddhas of *kishōmon* oaths

In the light of this division of tasks, it is no more than logical that the "saving buddhas" are conspicuously absent from oaths, where it is the ability to punish that is vital. However, we must be careful not to oversimplify the problem. Even though kami outnumber buddhas in oaths, buddhas do figure in them too.

Representative of the buddhas invoked in oaths is the "Great Buddha" of Tōdaiji in Nara. This Great Buddha features regularly in oaths addressed to Tōdaiji monks and inhabitants of Tōdaiji lands, as in the following examples:

9 NKBT 24, pp. 156–7.
10 KI 5, no. 3006.

> If the signatories falsely claim that these items are invalid and ignore them, they shall each and all, in person, incur the punishment of the Great Buddha, Hachiman, and all the major and minor deities and demons of the sixty provinces [of Japan] as well as all lands under heaven.[11]

> If these five persons claim that these items are invalid, they will each and all incur, in all the 84,000 pores of their skin, the punishment of Bonten, Taishaku and the four Deva Kings above, of all the deities and demons in the Three Worlds [below], and especially of the Great Buddha and Hachiman.[12]

In an attempt to explain the occurrence of the Great Buddha in these oaths, I at first leaned towards the interpretation that the words "the Great Buddha" here may merely function as a sort of epithet to Hachiman, the violent tutelary deity of Tōdaiji: "Hachiman of the Great Buddha." But I soon had to abandon this hypothesis in the light of other oaths, invoking, for example, "the Great Buddha of the Tōdaiji, Yakushi Nyorai, the Twelve Divine Generals, and the tutelary deity Hachiman Daibosatsu."[13] Here we find not only that the Great Buddha and Hachiman are separated, but also that another buddha, Yakushi, figures among the punishing deities, seemingly putting an end to my hypothesis about the division of tasks between kami and buddhas. Clearly, we must take a closer look at the buddhas invoked in oaths.

One does not need to look far to find invocations of Buddhist divinities of various types:

> 1 . . . the punishment of the tutelary deities of the capital: the three shrines of Hachiman, the Upper and Lower Kamo shrines, the seven shrines of Hie Sannō, the five shrines of Inari, Gion Tenjin; and especially of the thirty-eight shrines of Ishiyama Kannon . . .[14]

> 2 . . . the punishment of the Kannon, the Great Deity (*daimyōjin*) and the Dharma-protectors of this mountain . . .[15]

> 3 We invoke the major and minor deities and demons of Japan, the Princes (*ōji*) with retainers enshrined in the seven shrines of [Hie] Sannō, and especially the Fudō Myōō of this place, the assembled Dharma-protectors of the three Honoured Ones, the seven shrines of Great Deities (*daimyōjin*), the six Great Kongō dōji, the great

11 HI 8, no. 4009.
12 KI 5, no. 2916.
13 HI 6, no. 2644.
14 HI 7, no. 3229.
15 KI 5, no. 2841.

> Gongen who is the lord of this territory, and the Great Deity of the old pond at this place . . .[16]

> 4 . . . the punishment of Bonten, Taishaku, the four Deva Kings and the various Great Deities who protect the capital, and especially of Tenshō Daijin (Amaterasu) in Ise, the three Gongen of Kumano, the Princes [along the route to Kumano] and their retainers, the two shrines of Mishima that protect the East (i.e. the Kantō), and particularly the Great Deity of the storehouse of this shrine estate, the Yakushi Nyorai of this temple.[17]

At first sight, it is not easy to see what the bodhisattva Kannon, the Wisdom King Fudō Myōō, and the buddhas Yakushi and the Great Buddha of Tōdaiji might have in common. On second thoughts, however, I noticed that all of the Buddhist divinities invoked here are physically present in the form of a statue or image at some specified place in Japan.

Yakushi Nyorai is usually imagined as the ruler of a buddha-realm in the distant east, and is as such located in a different dimension, far removed from the territory of Japan. However, the Yakushi who figures in (4) is different: here, it is the Yakushi image of "*this temple*" (Daifukuji) that is invoked. Similarly, the Great Buddha called upon in so many oaths is not the Vairocana of the Realm of the Lotus Treasury, but, quite concretely, the very buddha image enshrined in the Great Buddha Hall at Tōdaiji. The same applies for the Ishiyama Kannon (1), the Kannon "*of this mountain*" (2), and the Fudō Myōō "*of this place*" (3).

This leads us to a new hypothesis, namely, that the buddhas invoked in oaths are tangible, material buddhas who are physically present in specific places, and not metaphysical buddhas who dwell in a distant realm or paradise. The same logic applies to the following examples:

> . . . shall Sukekata incur the divine punishment of Kasuga Daimyōjin, the Three Treasures of the Seven Halls, and the major and minor deities and demons of the sixty provinces [of Japan].[18]

> . . . shall incur the punishment of Bonten, Taishaku and the four Great Deva Kings, all the Honoured Ones and eternal Buddhas of the Two Mandalas, as well as the Three Great Holy Ones and the two Gongen.[19]

Both the "Three Treasures" (Buddha, Dharma, and Saṃgha) of the first example, and the divinities of the Two Mandalas in the second, at first sight appear to be abstract concepts; but in the first case, it is not the Three Treasures in

16 KI 21, no. 1636.
17 KI 35, no. 27394.
18 KI 16, no. 11946.
19 KI 17, no. 12957.

general that are invoked, but the particular ones of the "Seven Halls" of Kasuga-Kōfukuji (and, in particular, the buddhas enshrined there). In the second example, too, it may be assumed that the divinities invoked here are those of the mandalas that were actually enshrined at Kongōbuji at that time. This becomes all the more probable when one realises that all the other buddhas referred to in this oath were indeed physically present at the temple in the form of scrolls or statues.

It would seem, then, that those buddhas who were physically enshrined in temples performed the same role as the Japanese kami, namely that of punishing enemies. This hypothesis is supported also by the following rare example of an oath that features an unlocalised buddha:

> Those who break these regulations will become unable to receive the otherworldly assistance of the buddhas of past, present and future, and especially of Śākyamuni, and they will be banned to the Hell of Uninterrupted Suffering for all eternity.[20]

Here, it is not stated explicitly that the buddhas will punish the offenders; but they will withhold their "saving" powers, and thus in effect cause them to fall into the evil realms. In this roundabout way, this oath, too, supports the hypothesis that only localised buddhas were thought to execute punishments.

The convergence in function between localised buddhas and kami also explains the many examples in which such buddhas were actually called kami, and were categorised as such. The anecdote around the oath in *Sanshō-dayū* mentioned above is one such example. After Sanshō Dayū had demanded an oath invoking "the kami of Japan, great and small," the abbot who was hiding Zushiōmaru swore a new oath in which he named not only the kami of Ise, Kumano, and Iwashimizu but also such localised buddhas and bodhisattvas as the "Senju Kannon in Takimoto" and the "Jūichimen Kannon in Hase."

This means that our initial distinction between "saving buddhas" and "wrathful kami" needs to be revised. The functions of saving and punishing cannot simply be attributed to buddhas and kami respectively. Rather than talking of buddhas and kami, I shall below resort to the word "deities," as an umbrella term including both buddhas and kami, and distinguish between two varieties: "saving deities" (buddhas who dwell in another realm, and have the function of saving sentient beings after death) and "wrathful deities" (Japanese kami and physical buddhas who dispense punishments and rewards in this world).

The question remains why physical buddhas came to be classified together with the kami. In order to answer this question, we need to take a closer look at the role in oaths of yet other kinds of divine beings.

20 KI 6, no. 3795.

Different kinds of wrathful deities

When we scan medieval oaths for deities other than Japanese kami and localised buddhas, the first category that presents itself is that of the saints and patriarchs of Buddhist lineages. At Kōyasan, many oaths invoked Kōbō Daishi (Kūkai). In one example from 1185, the peasants of Kōyasan lands had to swear that if they were to tolerate or fail to report any misbehaviour by Kōyasan low-ranking monks (*dōshu*), they would be punished by "[Kōbō] Daishi, the Great Deity, and the Vajradevas" (i.e. the temple's founder, its tutelary kami, and the Buddhist protector deities).[21] Many Shingon oaths, preserved in the records of temple complexes such as Kōyasan and Tōji, mention the "eight Great Patriarchs" of the Shingon school, from Nāgārjuna to Kūkai. In Nichiren documents, invocation of the "Great Saint" (Nichiren) in oaths became common from the early fourteenth century onwards. One typical example calls for the punishment enacted by "the *Lotus Sutra*, the ten *rākṣasa* [female deities who have vowed to protect those who keep the *Lotus Sutra*], and the Great Saint [Nichiren]."[22] Finally, one can also find oaths invoking Shōtoku Taishi, yet another famous saint of Japanese Buddhism.[23]

What did these patriarchs have in common? All became the object of worship shortly after their death; also, they were thought not to have left for some Pure Land, but rather to have remained in Japan in order to protect their followers. Famously, Kūkai was believed to have "entered meditation" rather than died at Kōyasan, and to dwell eternally in a "meditation cave" on that mountain. About Nichiren, it was said that he had "left his mind" at Mount Minobu, and his grave on this mountain was held sacred by his disciples.[24] Worship of Shōtoku Taishi, moreover, spread across sectarian boundaries. Essential to his cult were the prophecies that he was believed to have made in his (apocryphal) *Miraiki* or "Record of the future." Knowledge of these prophecies spread widely in the course of the medieval period, first and foremost from Shitennōji, a temple in Ōsaka that had been founded by Shōtoku Taishi and where his "saintly spirit" was worshipped in a hall dedicated to this purpose. The popularity of Shōtoku Taishi's prophecies indicates that he too was thought to influence affairs in this world also after his death. Statues and scrolls depicting these patriarchs were produced in enormous numbers, and figured prominently in the devotion of the people. The eight Great Patriarchs, which include Indian and Chinese monks, would at first sight appear to be of a somewhat different character, in the sense that at least

21 HI 8, no. 4237.

22 KI 33, no. 25475.

23 KI 37, no. 29002 mentions "the saintly spirit of [Shōtoku] Taishi and the Three Treasures of the Seven Halls."

24 This idea is expressed clearly in a letter from Nikkō to Hakiri Sanenaga: "The village of Nakiri in Kai province is the diamond-seat of the eternal Śākyamuni. No demons (*tenma hajun*) can disturb it. It is the spirit-mountain of Nichiren Shōnin, the Bodhisattva of Superior Practice (Jōgyō)." NSZ 2, p. 169.

some of them were not local, but also they were represented in the form of statues and scrolls, and were the object of popular worship.

Of the Tendai abbot Ryōgen or Jie Daishi (913–85), legend said that he "did not go to the Pure Land, but has remained on our mountain (Mount Hiei) to this day, in order to protect the Three Treasures of the mountain and ensure the transmission of its teachings."[25] The same Ryōgen also played a role in popular practice under the name of Tsuno Daishi, the "Horned Master." It was said that Ryōgen took on the appearance of a horned demon (*yasha*) in order to free the sentient beings of disease-causing deities. The custom of hanging an image of the Horned Master Ryōgen over one's door in order to avert misfortune remains popular in certain parts of Japan until this day. Ryōgen, then, is a striking example of a Buddhist patriarch who lived on after his death as a "wrathful" deity who subdues evil.[26]

Yet another category of divine beings that features in oaths are Indian and Chinese deities that entered Japan with the Buddhist pantheon. As representatives of such deities, we have already encountered Bonten, Taishaku, the four Deva Kings, and the ten *rākṣasa* who protect the Lotus practitioner.

> Yoshinaga will incur, in all the pores of his body, the divine punishment of Bonten, Taishaku, and the four Deva Kings; of the tutelary deities of the capital, the Great Deities of the Upper and Lower Kamo shrines; and especially of the tutelary deity of the abbot temple (*bettōji*), the Great Bodhisattva Hachiman.[27]

Listing Bonten, Taishaku, the four Deva Kings, and the Sun and Moon constitutes the most popular format of medieval oaths. In contrast to buddhas, bodhisattvas, and Wisdom Kings (*myōō*), it appears that Dharma-protectors such as these, which belonged to the category of devas, were conceived of as similar in status to the indigenous kami. Indeed, already in the early stages of the process of kami-Buddhist amalgamation, many kami were defined as protectors of Buddhism. Since they performed the same function as devas, kami and devas quite naturally merged into a single divine category.

This is not to say, however, that devas and kami were regarded as completely equal. This emerges clearly from the following source:

> I hereby invite the major and minor kami of Japan: above, Bonten and Taishaku; below, the four Deva Kings; and in the lower world, the deities of Ise: Tenshō Kōdaijin [Amaterasu], the Outer Shrine, the Inner Shrine, and the eighty sub-shrines [of Ise].[28]

25 *Goshūi ōjō den*, in NST 20, p. 162.
26 Murayama Shūichi (1976), ch. "Jie Daishi no shinkō."
27 KI 2, no. 858.
28 *Karukaya*, in *Sekkyōbushi*, p. 300.

According to Buddhist cosmology, the lands of Taishaku, the four Deva Kings and the various devas are located in vertical order on the slopes of Mount Sumeru, which rises at the centre of our Sahā realm. Above the very summit of Mount Sumeru lies the heaven of Bonten, the supreme ruler of the Sahā realm. This vertically segmented world-view is reflected directly in the way the deities are listed in this oath: above – below – in the lower world (that is, in Japan, located in Jambudvīpa below Mount Sumeru).

In this cosmological vision, Japan finds a place as a remote and tiny archipelago far removed from the centre of the world. Accordingly, the kami who are confined to this small corner of "the lower world" are ranked below the devas who look out over the entire Sahā realm from their lofty palaces. Their subordinate role is expressed clearly in *Kitano Tenjin engi* (early twelfth century), where the kami Tenjin pronounces in an oracle: "All the thunder demons, 105,000 in total, are my underlings. All disasters in this world are my doing. Taishaku has commissioned me with this task and given me a free hand."[29] Here, Taishaku figures as a kind of overlord of the Japanese kami.

The deities of the deva category were superior to the kami not only in the scope of their powers, but also in their potency. *Konjaku monogatarishū* contains a tale in which the kami of Atsuta travelled to Nara to hear a certain monk preach the Dharma, but was turned away by Bonten, Taishaku, and the four Deva Kings.[30] This tale suggests that on occasion, Bonten and Taishaku could descend from their heavens to protect the Buddhist Dharma by force.

Before concluding, I would like to make one final point. In the following oath, the four Deva Kings figure twice, in different roles:

> . . . shall incur the divine punishment both of Bonten, Taishaku and the four Deva Kings, and of the Deva Kings and devas of the Three Worlds – among them especially the Great Buddha, the four Kings, the three Hachiman shrines, and all the major and minor kami of Japan.[31]

In the first case, "the four Deva Kings" refers to the four Kings who dwell on Mount Sumeru and protect the Sahā realm from there; in the second, "the four Kings" designates the physical statues of these Kings that were actually enshrined at Tōdaiji (at the Great Buddha Hall or the Precepts Hall). It would appear that just as in the case of buddhas, devas, too, were ranged in the same category as the Japanese kami as soon as they were given physical form and enshrined in a specific place.

We have seen that the category of "wrathful deities" included not only the Japanese kami and localised buddhas, but also the spirits of Buddhist saints

29 NST 20, p. 162.
30 NKBT 25, p. 59.
31 KI 26, no. 1942.

and patriarchs and of various levels of devas. What all these disparate figures have in common is that they dwelt in this land, and not in some distant realm. From their this-worldly residences, they were thought to keep a close watch on the sentient beings in the Sahā realm, and to dispense rewards and punishments depending on their behaviour. Those buddhas who were smugly installed in some other realm were unfit to carry out the task of putting fear into the sentient beings by means of stern retribution. To achieve that, one needed visible, tangible deities who were present and real in every sense of the word.

The medieval cosmology of deities and buddhas

It has become clear that the "wrathful deities" invoked in oaths were always deities of this world. They could be devas that dwelt in the Sahā realm, such as Bonten, Taishaku, and the four Deva Kings, or different kinds of deities based in Japan, ranging from the kami to buddhas enshrined at temples, or even Buddhist saints and patriarchs who were believed to have stayed in Japan after their death. This brings us to question what the position of these wrathful deities was within the overall cosmology of deities and buddhas – including the contrasting category of "saving deities." As a way in to this problem, I would like to introduce the following *keibyakumon* (a ritual text addressing the deities):

> This disciple of the Buddha, Kōen, folds his hands in utmost sincerity, bows his head and prostrates himself. Buddhas of the past, present and future, of all ten directions, who pervade the Emptiness and fill the Dharma Realm; perfectly enlightened ones; all bodhisattvas and mahāsattvas; all great Wisdom Kings; host of fearsome holy ones; all śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas; Bonten; Taishaku; the four Deva Kings; the twelve Great Devas; the twenty-eight devas; sun, moon, and the five stars; the twenty-eight stellar mansions; the deva Daikoku; the Earth God Kenrō; the deva Benzaiten; the deva Daikichijōten; the deva Daishō Kangiten; the Dharma protector General Sanshi; the twenty-eight demons; the twelve Divine Generals; all Dharma-protecting deva kings and devas; and all the benevolent Divine Kings – once more I bow my head to do you honour.
>
> In the Lecture Hall of this mountain, Śākyamuni, Maitreya, Kannon, Bonten, the four Kings, and the Dharma-protecting holy ones; in the Central Hall, Yakushi and his attendant bodhisattvas Nikkō and Gakkō, the great saint Monju, the deva king Bishamon, the twelve Divine Generals, and the assembly of saints; in the Hall of Turning the Wheel, Śākyamuni, the four Kings who protect the world, and the four devas; in the precincts of the Eastern and Western

> Pagodas, the holy ones of the Three Treasures of the various halls and monks' quarters of the Ryōgon'in, the three holy ones of the Mountain King, the Princes and their retainers, and all Dharma-protecting holy ones of this mountain – once more I profoundly revere you.
>
> All Great Deities of Hachiman, Kamo, Matsuo, Inari, Hirano, Ōharano, Kasuga, Sumiyoshi, and others, Gion Tenjin, Tenman Tenjin, [deities] of the five home provinces and the seven circuits of Japan – once more I express my devotion to you.
>
> Great patriarchs of China, the Great Masters Nanyue, Tiantai, Zhang'an and Miaole; the *acārya* of the Law Shanwuwei, Jingangzhi, Bukong, Yixing, Huiguo, Faquan and others; the founders of our mountain Dengyō Daishi and Jikaku Daishi; all the honoured transmitters of the Law, both exoteric and esoteric – in one mind of deed, word and thought I offer my respect.[32]

This *keibyakumon* may at first sight appear like a motley collection of miscellaneous deities, but on closer inspection, it soon becomes clear that its ranking of these deities is based on a well-defined world-view.

Buddhist cosmology usually distinguishes between ten levels of beings, with the buddhas at the top, and ranged under them in hierarchical order bodhisattvas, pratyekabuddhas, śrāvakas, devas, humans, asuras, beasts, hungry ghosts, and finally those who have fallen into a hell. Of these ten levels, the highest four are called the "four kinds of holy beings." Together, they form the realm of enlightenment; in contrast, the six realms from devas to hell constitute the realm of delusion. Between schools these various levels were conceptualised in widely different ways, from ten physically separate worlds to ten inner mind states, but the distinction of these levels was accepted as a doctrine by all. The ranking of deities in the *keibyakumon* cited above clearly reflects this shared Buddhist cosmology:

> buddhas: "buddhas of the past, present and future . . . perfectly enlightened ones";
> bodhisattvas: "all bodhisattvas and mahāsattvas";
> (Wisdom Kings): "all great Wisdom Kings"; "host of fearsome holy ones";
> pratyekabuddhas and śrāvakas: "all śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas";
> devas: "Bonten; Taishaku; the four Deva Kings . . . all the benevolent Divine Kings."

Although Wisdom Kings has to be added as an extra category, it is obvious that this ranking builds upon the common cosmological order of ten levels.

32 KI 31, no. 23970.

When we observe the position of the kami in this scheme, it becomes clear that they are ranked directly below the level of devas. One imagines that this reflects the understanding that the kami are "fearful deities" who dispense rewards and punishments in the realm of delusion, in contrast to the "four kinds of holy beings," who dwell in the otherworldly realm of enlightenment and engage solely in the task of saving the sentient beings.

The following oath, signed by Hōjō Yasutoki (1183–1242), displays the same cosmological hierarchy we encountered above in Kōen's *keibyakumon*:

> Taira no ason Yasutoki . . . in the land of Great Japan, Southern Continent of Jambudvīpa, Sahā world, pays his respect to the Lord of Shingon Dainichi Nyorai; all buddhas of the ten directions, in past, present and future; Jizō Bosatsu of great compassion; all mahāsattvas, both those who have reached the ten stages[33] and those who have not; the śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and all wise and holy ones; Bonten, Taishaku, and the four Deva Kings; all devas, the Pole Star and the Big Dipper; the seven luminaries and the nine luminaries (i.e. sun, moon, planets and other celestial bodies); the deities of the twelve halls [of the twelve moon months]; the twenty-eight stellar mansions; the stars Honmyō and Ganshin; the star of this year; the great and small stellar mansions of the Inner and Outer Shrines [of Ise]; moreover, the Dharma-King Enma; Taizan Fukun; Shimei and Shiroku; Godō Daijin; the hundred demon kings; the kami of heaven and earth; and the disease-causing deities of various seasons, with their retainers.[34]

Here, the devas are followed by yet other categories of divine beings, namely the stars and luminaries of heaven (beginning with the Pole Star) and the magistrates of the Realm of the Dead (Enma to Godō Daijin); but the same basic structure, proceeding from the four kinds of holy beings, to devas, and then to the kami, remains unchanged. The "wrathful deities" invoked in this oath are chosen with this cosmology in mind, from the deities of the deva- and lower categories, who inhabit our Sahā world.

Here we have to turn once more to the problem of the buddhas who are included in the same category as the kami. As argued above, those buddhas who had been given tangible form and enshrined in temples or chapels were viewed as similar in character to the kami. Also in Kōen's *keibyakumon* the divinities enshrined in various halls on Mount Hiei are invoked together with the kami, quite separately from the buddhas and bodhisattvas that are named first. We note, for example, that the Śākyamuni enshrined at the Lecture Hall

33 The forty-first through the fiftieth stages of the path of the bodhisattva, each associated with the elimination of certain impediments to enlightenment.

34 KI 7, no. 5261.

is considered to be a different divinity from the Śākyamuni enshrined in the Hall of Turning the Wheel. Even when the same buddha was represented in two locations, their physical manifestations were revered as two distinct deities.

The fact that the buddhas enshrined in the halls of Mount Hiei are ranked together with the kami, below the devas, means that the physical buddhas of Japan were conceptualised as beings similar to devas and kami. The "buddhas of Japan" were quite unlike the metaphysical buddhas who extend their compassion to all sentient beings in order to save them. Their task was to apportion this-worldly benefits and punishments directly in this realm of delusion.

Moreover, as soon as a buddha was enshrined in a particular location, an unbreakable karmic bond between this buddha and the local people was produced. *Hokkekyō genki* (*c*. 1040) tells of an abbot of Kaminaidera in Yamashiro province, who wanted to move away elsewhere; but in a dream he was confronted by the Yakushi of his temple, who ordered: "You are tied to this temple with a karmic bond. You will not be allowed to leave it."[35] Here, the buddhas, who on another level extend their beneficence to all sentient beings in the entire universe, have become inseparable from their local territory in the same way as the kami were believed to be. A similar notion of localised buddhas surfaces when we read that Japanese monks sent to China for study exclaimed: "Help me, oh Three Dharmas of the old country!",[36] or that they "prayed to the buddhas and kami of Japan."[37] Here too, we gauge the notion that some buddhas were inseparable from Japan.

Above, we have seen that a Buddhist cosmology determined the world-view of the medieval Japanese, and that this cosmology had the function of arranging kami and buddhas hierarchically. Also, we have seen that the lists of "wrathful deities" in oaths draw on this cosmology, and are collated from its lower levels: devas and below.

If this cosmology forms one way of binding together the two categories of "saving deities" and "wrathful deities," another way of achieving the same was the paradigm of "originals and traces." It is well known that from the late Heian period onwards, kami were defined as "traces" of "original" buddhas. Actually, this paradigm was not limited to buddhas and kami, but was used to establish links between different kinds of "saving deities" and "wrathful deities."

Ancient and medieval collections of tales abound in stories about miracle-working buddha images. *Konjaku monogatarishū* tells that during the age of Emperor Shōmu (r. 724–49), a wooden statue of Kannon enshrined at the mountain temple of Chinu escaped from a fire single-handedly.[38] An earlier

35 NST 7, p. 89.

36 NKBT 25, p. 59.

37 *Gōdanshō* (early 12th century), GR 27, p. 571.

38 NKBT 24, pp. 446–7.

version of this tale can be found in *Nihon ryōiki*, but in *Konjaku monogatarishū*, the following concluding remark has been added: "Of the Bodhisattva it is said that he does not appear in physical form, and that he hides himself even to the mind. He is invisible to the eye, and does not spread a smell; however, in order to inspire faith in the sentient beings, he performs miracles." In other words, buddhas and bodhisattvas are beings beyond the sensory reach of humans, but they appear in physical form in this world to show the people their salvific power. This tale illustrates the idea that a more universal buddha-body stood behind the particularised buddhas of Japan.[39]

On the other hand, saints and patriarchs of extraordinary spiritual powers were also regarded as "traces" of buddhas and bodhisattvas. A famous example is the early belief that Shōtoku Taishi was an emanation of the bodhisattva Kannon. Figures who came to be revered as founders of new schools were also identified as "rebirths" of scriptural bodhisattvas: Hōnen as a rebirth of Daiseishi, Shinran of Kannon, and Nichiren of Jōgyō. The *Yūzū nenbutsu engi* relates that when the founder of the Yūzū Nenbutsu school, Ryōnin (1072–1132) propagated this practice, he was joined by Bonten, Taishakuten, Jikokuten and other devas, by the teachers of the sutras, beginning with Nāgārjuna, and by the kami of Ise, Usa, Hie, and others. The *engi* continues:

> The Final Age of the Law has begun, and we live in a small and peripheral country; but even so, when Ryōnin Shōnin invites us to rely on the other [i.e. Amida's] power and chant the *nenbutsu*, the Deva Kings and devas of the Three Worlds all praise this *nenbutsu* and join in the *kechien* [bond-establishing rite]. This is no different from the praise of the various buddhas who exist in this world. They are transformation bodies, traces of the original, eternal buddha. Although original and trace are different, they share the same will to enlighten the sentient beings.[40]

In the light of this passage, it would seem that all the localised deities of Japan invoked in oaths, from the kami to buddha images and patriarchs, were thought to have their source in the buddhas of the realm of enlightenment. During the medieval period, then, the paradigm of original and trace was not only applied to link kami with buddhas, but much more widely, to link wrathful deities with saving deities. The various kinds of wrathful deities were all "traces" of the buddhas and bodhisattvas, sent to this realm of delusion in order to force the "evil people" of the peripheral land of Japan in the Latter Age of the Law onto the Buddhist path.

39 Yaegashi Naohiko (1994), ch. "*Nihon ryōiki* ni okeru shōryō."
40 *Zoku Nihon emaki taisei*, vol. 11: *Yūzū nenbutsu engi*, p. 109.

Characteristics of medieval cosmology

As we have seen above, the medieval understanding of the cosmos followed the Buddhist model, but included also local kami and saints. It distinguished between two categories of deities, which we have here termed "saving deities" and "wrathful deities," and linked these by means of the paradigm of "sacred originals and traces." This understanding was not solely the domain of the élite, or of a limited class of intellectuals, but was shared by all levels of society. The kami, moreover, found a stable position within the otherworldly realm only after they were incorporated in this cosmology.

What were the characteristics of this cosmology as an intellectual construct? First of all, we must point out the absence of an absolute power. At the top of this cosmology we find a host of invisible buddhas and bodhisattvas ("saving deities"), rather than a single, omnipotent figure. The main task of these saving deities was to save the sentient beings from being reborn in an evil realm. Collections of biographies of people who had achieved rebirth in Amida's Western Paradise were compiled in considerable numbers from the second half of the Heian period onwards. In these works, the main criterion for rebirth in paradise was thought to lie in the practices performed during one's lifetime. No attention was given to the individual characteristics of the buddha to whom the practitioner prayed for salvation; we seldom hear which buddha, enshrined in which temple, mediated salvation to the practitioner.

To illustrate my point, let me quote two biographies from the earliest collection on rebirth in paradise, *Nihon ōjō gokuraku-ki* (late tenth century):

> Myōyū, precept master and abbot of the ordination platform at Tōdaiji, maintained abstinence and kept the precepts throughout his life. He went to the Hall every night, and never stayed at the monks' quarters. He never ceased chanting the *nenbutsu* until the day of his death. He died on the 28th day of the 2nd month in the year Tentoku 5 (961).
>
> The Reverend Saigen was pure of spirit and never mingled with the soiled affairs of the world. He dedicated his entire life to the *nenbutsu*. On the day his life came to an end, a scent pervaded the room, and music filled the air. The white horse he used to ride knelt down and spilt tears.[41]

Here, no reference is made to a particular buddha; this is a phenomenon that is shared also by other biographies. In *Zoku honchō ōjō den* (*c*. 1102), for example, we are told that the monk Nyūen "throughout his life dedicated himself to the *nenbutsu*, and had no other skills or learning," or that a certain

41 NST 7, pp. 22–3.

Hankyū "never turned his back to the west, except when spitting or relieving himself";[42] but nothing is said of the buddha that was the object of their devotion. This stands in stark contrast to the collections of tales compiled during the same period, where miracles are always attributed to a specific buddha enshrined in a specific temple, and where the practices performed in front of that buddha are of secondary importance.

Of course, there are also examples where prayers for salvation after death are addressed to a physical buddha. One such example can be found in the bibliography of Ryōnin, also in *Zoku honchō ōjō den*: "He bathed and rinsed himself with perfume, a five-coloured cord was tied to the hand of the buddha [image], and he died while ceaselessly chanting the *nenbutsu*."[43] But even here, nothing is said about the buddha image used. We are not told who made it, or even which buddha it represents. Obviously, the compiler of this collection of biographies had no interest in determining what kind of buddha images were used in death-bed rituals; he was solely concerned with the question whether Amida had come to meet the dying from his distant Pure Land, and whether there were any miraculous signs that could be adduced as corroborating evidence of his coming.

This lack of concern indicates that it was not the physical buddha installed in the room, but the metaphysical buddha in the Pure Land who was believed to lead the deceased to paradise. If it is a buddha from the other world who saves the dying, the question what buddha image one addresses one's prayers to becomes irrelevant. The function of the buddha image here in the Sahā world is merely to mediate between the sentient beings and the buddha of the next world. Therefore it is no more than logical that people were concerned exclusively about the *practices* necessary to induce Amida's coming.

As "saving deities," buddhas from other realms such as Amida in this example were ranged above the "wrathful deities" of this world. We have seen that these categories of deities had different functions: one to save, and the other to punish; but there was a division of tasks also between the various deities in each category. Within the category of "saving deities," there was no hierarchical order between the various buddhas. They had their own paradises, and gave access to them to those sentient beings with whom they had a karmic link. In his *Bodaishinshū* Chinkai (1091–1152) put it as follows:

> If you have a close karmic relation with Amida, you must pray for [rebirth in] his paradise; if your karmic link with Maitreya is deeper, you should pray [to be reborn] in Tuṣita heaven. You can probably feel the direction of your karma by the stirring of your heart. Just follow your feelings; don't speak badly about any [buddha land].[44]

42 Ibid., p. 241.
43 Ibid., p. 660.
44 *Bodaishinshū*, in *Jōdoshū zensho* 15, p. 529.

To attain salvation after death, people could choose from a range of buddhas and their practices, all depending on which buddha and practice attracted them most. In choosing one, they did not slight the others; it was just that their karmic link to other buddhas was less strong.

Within the world of the "wrathful deities," too, there was an internal division of tasks. The *Zoku kojidan* (1219) includes the following tale:

> The Reverend Genshin, abbot of Saimyōbō, once said: "The Yakushi of the Central Hall has the same karmic origin as the Yakushi of [Kōryūji in] Uzumasa [in Ukyō, Kyoto]. When somebody prays to this Yakushi at the Central Hall to heal his illness, he appeared in his dream and said: 'With this illness you must go to the doctor at Ukyō. I can't help you with it. There is no distinction between him and me [i.e. the Yakushi of the Central Hall and of Kōryūji], but each of us has a karmic link with some, and not with others.' When this person went to Kōryūji and prayed there, his illness was healed immediately."[45]

Similar tales, in which believers are referred to more suitable deities, can be found in many medieval collections, attesting to a considerable level of specialisation among the various deities of the "wrathful" category.

The idea that the many different buddhas and kami had different specialisations was well suited to the Japanese situation, where shrines and temples dotted the land. It served to explain the coexistence of countless deities, who each in its own way dealt with a particular aspect of medieval reality. The idea that it was up to the people which deity they chose to address with their problems quite naturally led to a pronounced weakening of the authority of the deities. The notion of supreme deities whose will transcended the control of the secular authorities could hardly arise from a cosmology of this kind.

Conclusion

Ever since Tsuji Zennosuke's pioneering work a hundred years ago, studies addressing the relation between Japan's native kami cults and Buddhism have concentrated largely on the question how the two amalgamated over time. However, the premise of a bipolar divine realm, containing only kami and Buddhist divinities, and the exclusive focus on the different kinds of rapprochement and conflict between the two has placed severe methodological restrictions on the study of the subject. As a result, many questions have remained unasked.

First of all, while the conventional method has been useful in exploring the diachronical development of amalgamation, it has clear limitations when

45 GR 27, p. 671.

we take a synchronical perspective. Even more fundamentally, one has to raise the question to what extent the assumed dichotomy of kami versus Buddhist divinities was in any way important, or even recognised in pre-modern Japan.[46]

Of course, even in the medieval period many deities were clearly defined as either kami or buddhas, and there were ways to distinguish between the two. However, we must not lose sight of the fact that there was a large divine realm that was not so easily categorised. This applies to many if not most deities of the "wrathful" category I discussed in this chapter. It is hardly possible to understand the world-view and mentality of the medieval Japanese as long as we fail to take this basic fact into account. With a methodology that posits a simple distinction between kami and buddhas, one can never hope to make sense of the medieval divine realm. To supplement the findings arrived at with more traditional methods, in this chapter I have attempted to open up another perspective, which takes a functional approach to the history of kami-Buddhist relations.

Moreover, I have tried to show that the medieval Japanese, irrespective of class and station, shared a common grand cosmology, which included not only kami and buddhas, but the chaotic divine realm I mentioned above in its entirety. At the basis of this cosmology lay the Buddhist conceptions of the Ten Worlds and Mount Sumeru. The native kami were given a place within this world-view, and they were able to find a stable and lasting role within it only when they were linked to "saving deities" as their this-worldly "traces" – by means of the *honji suijaku* paradigm.

As long as this world-view was dominant, those who wished to raise the status of the kami had to operate within its boundaries. Accordingly, the much-discussed rise of "nationalism" in the late medieval period (inverted *honji suijaku*, and the notion of Japan as a "Land of the Kami") was not in any sense an anti-Buddhist or a non-Buddhist movement; these were not attempts to render the kami completely autonomous from Buddhism. Rather, Shinto thinkers tried to elevate the position of kami within the context of the dominant, Buddhist world-view of their age.[47]

Finally, I have attempted to sketch the main characteristics of this world-view. First and foremost, we must mention the absence of an absolute power of any kind. The medieval cosmos consisted of a multitude of "saving" and "wrathful" deities, who coexisted on the basis of a division of tasks. This world-view did not allow the conception of a supreme being with a strong will and an absolute power to punish and reward. Even if in some cases there was speculation about a deity who embodied the origin of the universe, such a deity was always without will and power, and could never be more than a personified idea (e.g. the Dharma-body).

46 On this problem, see Shimode Sekiyo (1991) and Shigeta Shin'ichi (1994).

47 See Satō Hiroo (1998), ch. 4, no. 1, "Chūseiteki shinkoku shisō no keisei."

When we posit the dominance of such a world-view, it is no doubt necessary to address once more the ideas of radical thinkers like Shinran and Nichiren. Both concentrated the authority to save, punish and reward in a single buddha (Amida and Śākyamuni respectively), and positioned this buddha also as the supreme ruler of this world. It is not possible to say more about their conceptions of the divine realm here, and this important topic will have to be discussed elsewhere. Let me just say that in my view, their ideas built on the shared cosmology of medieval Japan, but also included aspects fundamentally alien to it.

In this chapter, I have tried to shed light on aspects of the medieval divine realm that are hidden from view when one assumes a bipolar relationship between kami and buddhas alone. Even so, I have not touched upon large parts of the supernatural world of this period. The question how demons and ghosts such as *tengu* or witch animals were related to the divine realm as a whole remains unexplored. Also, I have proposed to distinguish between otherworldly "saving deities" and this-worldly "wrathful deities," but this is as yet no more than a tentative hypothesis. In medieval sources we actually find more than a few instances of people praying to the kami for a good rebirth. Other problems that remain to be explored are how the classical world-view and, indeed, the early modern world-view differed from the medieval one addressed here, and how the transition from one to the other can be described. In this chapter, I have done no more than propose a modest *Problemstillung*, and it is humbling to think of the long road that still needs to be travelled before any answers are in sight.

5

THE CREATION OF A *HONJI SUIJAKU* DEITY

Amaterasu as the Judge of the Dead

Mark Teeuwen

In his recent book *Amaterasu no henbō*, Satō Hiroo traces the transformation of the imperial ancestor and sun-deity Amaterasu from an ancient into a medieval type of kami.[1] Amaterasu, originally a local sun-deity enshrined in outlying Ise, was in the seventh century raised to the status of supreme ancestor of a divine imperial dynasty, as part of the larger project of building a centralised imperial state in Japan. However, Satō argues, the significance of Amaterasu's promotion to the highest position among the Japanese kami was initially limited by a number of constraints. One of these was that, like all kami of the ancient period, Amaterasu retained the character of a *tatarigami* – a deity who not only bestows blessings, but also lays curses when offended. Like all *tatarigami*, Amaterasu was a double-edged sword: her great power could be used to subdue others, but could also strike back at those who tried to wield it.[2] Another important limitation was Amaterasu's definition as the clan deity (*ujigami*) of the imperial lineage. The shrine of Amaterasu at Ise served as a Chinese-style ancestral mausoleum, where worship by others than the emperor was strictly forbidden; this precluded Amaterasu from playing any role at all in society at large.

However, during the medieval period (from the Kamakura period onwards), we encounter a radically different Amaterasu, who seems to have overcome these limitations. Satō argues that Amaterasu underwent the same transformation as other prominent kami at this time: from an irascible *tatarigami* who gave orders and threatened violence in a rather arbitrary fashion, to a more predictable kami who would punish and reward individuals according

1 Satō Hiroo (2000), esp. ch. 4.

2 Numerous examples of such behaviour can be found in the national histories. Satō (2000), pp. 130–2, refers to *Nihon shoki* (720), *Shoku Nihongi* (797), *Shoku Nihon kōki* (869), and *Sandai jitsuroku* (901).

to universal moral (or rather karmic) principles. In addition, Satō points out that from the latter half of the Kamakura period onwards, Amaterasu's name, which during ancient times was not widely known even among courtiers in the capital, suddenly appears widely in oaths (*kishōmon*), documents in which a juror exposes himself to divine punishment in case he fails to keep his commitments. In a word, the ancient *ujigami* Amaterasu had become a "national deity" and a focus for popular belief. Satō sees the essence of Amaterasu's new identity as the "lord of Japan" (*kokushu*), the leader of the assembled kami of Japan, who presides over all punishments and rewards enacted by the divine realm on its people.

Satō's views on the medieval Amaterasu must be seen in the wider context of his theory on the place of the kami in the cosmology of this time. Drawing once more on late-Kamakura oaths, Satō argues that the divine realm was neatly divided into two categories of deities: "saving deities" (metaphysical buddhas and bodhisattvas, whose task it was to save the sentient beings) and "wrathful deities" (various deities residing in our Sahā world, who protect Buddhism and exhort the sentient beings by means of this-worldly punishments and rewards).[3] In this cosmological scheme, the kami were routinely placed on the lower echelons of the category of wrathful deities. A typical example lists the sacred forces of the cosmos as follows, in descending order of prominence:

> If there are those who offend against this oath, may they suffer the divine punishment of Bonten [Sk. Brahmā], Taishakuten [Indra], the Four Deva Kings, all devas of the Three Realms [of Non-Form, Form and Desire], the Pole Star, the Big Dipper and deities of the [Twelve] Halls, the Dharma-King Enma [Yama], Taizan Fukun, Shimei and Shiroku, the Lord of Japan Tenshō Daijin [i.e. Amaterasu].[4]

Satō points out that in the wider pantheon listed in oaths like this one, Amaterasu's status as the Lord of Japan was not necessarily a particularly prominent one. He stresses that Amaterasu remained a minor force, and argues that although further elevation of Amaterasu was crucial to the reconstruction of imperial authority at this time, such a move was impeded by the dominant Buddhist world-view and the position of the kami within it. Here, Satō maintains, the *honji suijaku* paradigm firmly kept the kami in a subordinate position, and attempts at either reversing or overcoming it never reached beyond an extremely narrow circle of intellectuals.

I have here introduced some aspects of Satō's analysis of the new medieval Amaterasu because he offers a number of important insights into the position

3 See Satō's essay in this volume.

4 KI vol. 29, no. 22553, quoted by Satō (2000) on p. 143. For further discussion of many of these divinities, see below.

of kami in the *honji suijaku* paradigm. As they were incorporated into a Buddhist world-view, the kami ceased to be wild, untamed powers that would arbitrarily latch out at those around them, and instead became the executors of karmic retribution. At the same time, many ancient clan shrines survived the decline of their original clans, and reinvented themselves by developing a new, more inclusive and universal identity, and thus new markets for their ritual services.

Amaterasu's shrine at Ise was a typical example of this. The Ise shrine complex consisted of an Inner Shrine and an Outer Shrine, where the Imperial House revered its ancestor Amaterasu (at this time called either Amateru Ōngami or, in *on'yomi*, Tenshō Daijin), and the deity of food and water Toyouke, as well as a considerable number of auxiliary shrines and lesser sub-shrines resorting under these two main shrines. The Ise shrines were privileged in the sense that they continued to receive considerable financial support from the state also after the collapse of the system of regular court offerings. Since *c*. 1070, a national tax (*Daijingū yakubukumai*) was levied on both private and public lands for the funding of Ise's main ritual, the vicennial renewal of all shrine buildings and deity treasures (*shikinen sengū*). Benefiting from the fame and status that this tax conferred on Ise in the eyes of tax-paying landowners, the shrines developed their own network of commended estates in the course of the twelfth century – some 450 by *c*. 1210.[5] This brought Ise into close and regular contact with a large new constituency, and gave Ise priests a much-needed opportunity to expand their ritual services to new élites. By the mid-Kamakura period, Ise had become the nexus of a private economic unit – a minor player in the new power structure, in which various factions at the imperial court, warrior groups loosely controlled by the Kamakura shogunate, and large religious institutions vied for control over the country's resources.

The term "Ise priests" covers many different groups, and is not easily defined. Most prominent among them were members of three clan lineages: the Ōnakatomi (who supervised both shrines in the name of the court, and built up a large portfolio of estates in the Ise region), the Arakida (priests of the Inner Shrine) and the Watarai (priests of the Outer Shrine). In addition, *shugen*-type practitioners linked to Ōmine, Kumano, Hasedera and Kōyasan were active in the margins of the Ise complex. All these groups expanded rapidly, most notably during the Insei period (1086–1192). If we look only at the Arakida and Watarai priests, we find that in the early tenth century, Ise employed two *negi* and twenty-three *ōuchindo*;[6] but by 1221 the number of *negi* had risen to sixteen, and a source from 1116 (*Chōya gunsai*) already

5 These are listed in *Jingū zōreishū* (*c*. 1202–10?), in GR 1, p. 154. Most were concentrated in the provinces around Ise Bay and in the Kantō plain.

6 To these are to be added sixty-one ritualists of low rank: *monoimi* (young girls), fathers of *monoimi*, and *kouchindo*. These were not full-status priests.

counts ninety-one *gonnegi* of the fourth to fifth court ranks.[7] Not only did the number of priests rise rapidly, their activities expanded as well. The *ōuchindo* of the tenth century had purely ritual tasks, while the *gonnegi* of the twelfth century were involved in collecting the Ise tax, persuading landowners to commend lands to Ise, and acquiring and protecting land rights throughout the country both for themselves and for their shrines. In other words, Ise worship had become a private industry, employing a rapidly growing group of ritualists who no longer relied on court funding alone.

As a natural result of these changes, a new Amaterasu emerged. Here, however, Satō throws up a number of questions that need further discussion. What was the ritual reality behind the new Amaterasu? What ritual expression was given to the "belief" in Amaterasu as the "Lord of Japan"? Was Amaterasu indeed worshipped exclusively as a "wrathful deity" as defined by Satō? Is Satō correct to assume that concerns with imperial authority were a major factor in the development of the new Amaterasu? And finally, should the *honji suijaku* paradigm be seen as a brake on this development, or was it, quite to the contrary, the very motor that propelled it?

The nature of medieval Amaterasu beliefs is not easy to pin down. Documents relating to the donation of estates to Ise reveal little about the Ise faith that no doubt played a role in such transactions; at most, we read that a donor intended his donation as "a personal prayer" (*naishin no kinen*).[8] We know that Minamoto no Yoritomo employed an Ise priest of the Ōnakatomi lineage to pray for victory in battle, as well as for "peace in the realm, and the fulfillment of personal wishes";[9] but this too reveals little about the Ise beliefs that were current at the time, let alone about ritual practices around Amaterasu.

In my search for sources that could give us a taste of the new Amaterasu of the Insei and early Kamakura periods, I came across a text with the intriguing title *Tenshō Daijin giki*. As its title indicates, this text is a ritual manual (*giki*) containing instructions on the worship of Tenshō Daijin, or Amaterasu. Although the text is rather short (it fits onto two pages in a recent edition), it reveals an extremely complicated and well-developed network of *honji suijaku* associations, all revolving around a ritual of invoking and offering to Amaterasu at dawn, and it allows us to draw some conclusions about the questions raised by Satō. But first, the dating, origin, and contents of this text will have to be studied in some detail.

7 Hagiwara Tatsuo (1985), pp. 161–2.

8 In a document from 1146, relating to the donation of an estate to the Inner Shrine by the Kantō *bushi* leader Chiba Tsuneshige. Quoted in Okada Shōji (1985), p. 11.

9 Okada Shōji (1985), p. 12.

Tenshō Daijin giki

A first fact to note is that *Tenshō Daijin giki* is an initiatory document, which shows obvious signs of use in the context of esoteric initiations. One of the oldest manuscripts, preserved at Kanazawa Bunko and dated to the early fourteenth century, is written on a squarish piece of paper folded in a way that is typical for initiatory documents: first double, into a rectangular shape, and then into smaller squares folded on top of each other in a harmonica-like fashion (*masugata origami*).[10] The Kanazawa manuscript is folded together with a slightly older sheet, containing some information about the origin of the text's transmission. This sheet, entitled *Hōshi giki sōden no koto* ("On the transmission of Baozhi's ritual manual") and dated 1278, shows that initiations into *Tenshō Daijin giki* were taking place at Shōmyōji at this time.

Kanazawa Bunko was part of the Shōmyōji temple complex, located in modern Yokohama. This Bunko contains perhaps the most important collection of thirteenth and fourteenth century Shinto texts.[11] They were collected by the abbot Kenna (1261–1338), who served as the second abbot of Shōmyōji from 1305 until his death. The oldest manuscripts of central texts such as the *Nihon shoki* (720) and the *Kogoshūi* (807) are in his hand, as is the oldest manuscript of the *Reikiki* (late thirteenth century), an important Ryōbu Shinto compilation. Kenna had a wide interest in kami matters, and is known to have performed kami rituals for prominent retainers of the Kamakura shogunate. Over and above this, his collection bespeaks a special fascination for the Ise shrines, and *Tenshō Daijin giki* is only one of a considerable number of texts on the subject preserved either in his own hand or that of one of his disciples. The *Tenshō Daijin giki* manuscript preserved at Kanazawa Bunko has been identified as the hand of a certain Soei, who was initiated by Kenna in 1336. Soei's original, Kenna's copy, has also been preserved, and is now at Sonkeikaku Bunko in Tokyo. It carries no colophon, but a lineage chart preserved at Kanazawa Bunko reveals that Kenna received kami initiations from Shūhan, a monk with close links to Murōji in the mountains between Ise and the Yamato basin, at some time between 1312 and 1318.[12]

10 Kanazawa Bunko (ed.) *Kanazawa bunko no chūsei Shintō shiryō*, August 1996, pp. 5–7.

11 See Kushida Ryōkō (1964), pp. 245–64, and Yūki Rikurō (1959).

12 On Soei and Shūhan, see *Kanazawa bunko no chūsei shintō shiryō*, pp. 5–7. Murōji was a centre of early Buddhist Ise-related ritual, and the cradle of a lineage known as Goryū Shinto. An apocryphal "testament" (*Goyuigō*) of the Shingon patriarch Kūkai (774–835), which is currently dated to the mid-Heian period, stated that Kūkai had buried a Wish-Fulfilling Gem (*nyoi hōju*), given to him in China by his master Huiguo (746–805), on the "Peak of Assiduous Practice" at Murō. This legend served to explain the prominence of the remote mountain temple of Murōji as a centre of Shingon rituals focusing on this magical gem. Ritual practices around the Wish-Fulfilling Gem became prominent first during the Insei period, and flourished in many shapes and forms throughout the Middle Ages. This gem was linked theologically with one of the imperial regalia, the *magatama*

On the origin of *Tenshō Daijin giki*, *Hōshi giki sōden no koto* says:

> Copied at lodgings in Nijō Karasuma [in Kyoto], Chōkan 2 (1164)/5/21.
>
> It is said about this text that it was transmitted to Shōzen, great-great-grandson of the *saishu* [Ōnakatomi no] Nagayori and monk at Onjōji, from the monk's cell (*shitsu*) of Keisen, precept-master at the Hyakkōbō [of Onjōji].

Nagayori served as the *saishu* ("Head of Ise Rituals") from 992 to 1000, and was known for his Buddhist leanings. The main duty of *saishu* was to serve as intermediaries between the Jingikan at the court and the Ise shrines; by the mid-Heian period, the *saishu* had also gained full control over the lands allotted to the Ise shrines, and had developed into the highest authority at Ise, both ritually and economically.[13] *Kojidan* (*c*. 1212–15) records that Nagayori was in doubt whether it was suitable for a man in his position to be actively involved in Buddhism until, during a retreat at the Inner Shrine, a golden Kannon image appeared before him.[14] After this, Nagayori founded an Ōnakatomi clan temple (Rengeji) just outside Ise, and later he became perhaps the first *saishu* to take the tonsure shortly before his death. Keisen was the founder of another Ōnakatomi clan temple (Shakusonji); Shōzen appears to be a mistake for Sōzen (fl. 1086), another Ōnakatomi monk who served as an imperial envoy to Ise.[15] Thus *Hōshi giki sōden no koto* points at the Ōnakatomi *saishu* lineage as the milieu in which *Tenshō Daijin giki* originated.

This information overlaps with a colophon to another early Buddhist text related to Ise, *Nakatomi harae kunge*. This text, according to its colophon first copied in 1191, also identifies itself as a transmission received by Shōzen in the lineage of Keisen, both of the Hyakkōbō at Onjōji. For a variety of reasons, it is now widely accepted among Japanese scholars that *Nakatomi harae kunge* can indeed be dated to the mid- or late twelfth century.[16] The

jewel, and via this route also with Amaterasu and Ise. It would seem that because of this link between Murōji and Ise, Ise-related initiation documents were collected there in the course of the thirteenth century, and that a considerable number of such documents, including *Tenshō Daijin giki*, reached Kenna by way of Shūhan.

13 See Fujinami-ke Monjo Kenkyūkai (ed.) (1993), and Kokugakuin Daigaku Nihon Bunka Kenkyūjo (ed.) (2000).

14 SZKT 18 *Kojidan* 5, p. 110.

15 Both monks figure in *Jimon denki horoku* (16 and 15, respectively), which backs up the information in the colophon. However, the claim that Shōzen was a descendant of Nagayori is incorrect. The mistake must have its origin in a confusion between Shōzen and another monk, Sōzen, who is mentioned in *Nakatomi-shi keizu* as Nagayori's great-grandson (and not great-great-grandson). See Okada Shōji (1983), pp. 367–8 and Matsumoto Ikuyo (2000).

16 See Teeuwen and Van der Veere (1998). Another view on this matter has been offered recently by Matsumoto Ikuyo (2000). Matsumoto traces variations in the colophon to

dating of *Tenshō Daijin giki* builds on its relation to *Nakatomi harae kunge*; both Okada Shōji and Itō Satoshi argue that *Nakatomi harae kunge* draws on *Tenshō Daijin giki*.[17] For this reason, Okada and Itō consider it likely that the date of 1164 mentioned in *Hōshi giki sōden no koto* is based on some historical fact.

This brief look at Japanese research into the dating of these texts amply illustrates the particular difficulties involved. The evidence one is forced to depend on is flimsy and unreliable by its very nature. The colophon mentioning Shōzen as the source of both *Nakatomi harae kunge* and *Tenshō Daijin giki* does not occur in all, or even the earliest manuscripts of these two texts.[18] No manuscripts of *Tenshō daijin giki* carry a colophon, and our only clue is the attached sheet from 1278 mentioned above. An even more fundamental problem is the nature of this kind of colophon. Its function was to give the text a history that legitimised its (ideally exclusive) use by its current holders on the one hand, and that linked the text to some form of court-sanctioned tradition on the other. If we take a sceptical view, then, the claim that the text was transmitted by descendants of a tenth century Buddhist *saishu* may imply nothing more than that it had been adopted by the Ōnakatomi at the time of the writing of *Hōshi giki sōden no koto* in the latter half of the Kamakura period.

Yet another problem is the fact that even when we accept that *Nakatomi harae kunge* (and therefore also *Tenshō Daijin giki*) dates from the mid- to late twelfth century, it is obvious that some passages in the text must have been interpolated at a later stage.[19] In general, texts of this kind were of a fluid nature. They were on occasion "updated" by incorporating passages from other, related texts, and passages that had lost their relevance were dropped with each copying. This renders it almost impossible to draw firm conclusions about the earliest versions of these texts. It is essential to

deliberate manipulations by Outer Shrine priests (notably Watarai Yukitada, 1236–1305) and Ōnakatomi-lineage monks (notably Tsūkai, 1234–1305), and argues that Tsūkai may have been the (or at least an) original compiler of this text. Tsūkai turned Rengeji into a sub-temple of Daigoji, and developed it into a prominent Buddhist centre in Ise under the new name of Daijingū Hōrakuji.

17 Okada Shōji (1983), p. 364 and ST, vol. *Nakatomi harae chūshaku*, "Kaidai," p. 46; Itō Satoshi (1999), pp. 526–7. Matsumoto Ikuyo also points out that the *Nakatomi harae kunge* colophon appears to draw on *Hōshi giki sōden no koto* (2000, p. 150).

18 For *Nakatomi harae kunge*, it is first found in a manuscript from 1530 (preserved at Tokyo University) and a version printed by the Yoshida in 1615. The oldest manuscript, preserved at Kanazawa Bunko and dated to the late Kamakura period (early fourteenth century?), has no colophon at all, and the oldest manuscript of the variant *Nakatomi harae kige* that has a colophon (a copy by Bonshun from 1607) makes no mention of either Shōzen or Onjōji.

19 Most obvious are quotations, added to the latter part of the text, from works of Watarai Shinto, composed at the Outer Shrine of Ise in the course of the mid- to late thirteenth century. Later manuscripts also include interpolations by Yoshida copiers.

be aware of the fact that extant manuscripts have passed through a number of hands, and therefore also a number of recensions.

There is evidence that also the *Tenshō Daijin giki* of Sonkeikaku/Kanazawa Bunko is the result of a complicated history. I am aware of two editions of the text, one based on the Kanazawa Bunko manuscript by Soei, and one on a manuscript from Ōsu Bunko in Nagoya.[20] The main difference between the two is that while the Kanazawa manuscript consists of two fascicles (like most other known manuscripts), and attributes both to the legendary Chinese monk Baozhi (418–514), the Ōsu manuscript contains only the first fascicle, here presented as an "imperially commissioned translation" by the Indian Shingon patriarch and translator of esoteric scriptures, Vajrabodhi (671–741).[21] This manuscript carries no colophon, but is dated to the late Kamakura period on paleographical grounds, which means that it is contemporary with, or perhaps even slightly older than, the Sonkeikaku and Kanazawa manuscripts. As will become clear below, Baozhi is a central figure in the second fascicle of the text, but does not figure in the first fascicle. This suggests that the first fascicle may at first have existed as an independent text, and was merged with the fascicle that features Baozhi only later.

Moreover, two more manuscripts, of which I have not seen an edition, are preserved at Jingū Bunko. Yamamoto Hiroko points out a small but important difference between these manuscripts and the others, which will be examined in due course below.

Now, with the preliminaries taken care of, we can take a closer look at the contents of this text. Below, I shall summarise each of its two fascicles separately, followed by a brief analysis.

The first fascicle: Ise as King Enma's Palace

The first fascicle of *Tenshō Daijin giki* sets out with some basic information about Tenshō Daijin. This deity can be identified on a variety of levels: in the highest Realm of the Lotus Treasury as the World Buddha Birushana or Dainichi (Sk. Vairocana), or in the first meditation heaven of the Realm of Form as Bonshuten (Brahmā). Because he protects Great Kings,

20 The first can be found in *Kanazawa Bunko no chūsei shintō shiryō* (Kanazawa Bunko (ed.) 1996, pp. 22–5, no. 10), and the other in *Ryōbu shintōshū* (Kokubungaku Kenkyū Shiryōkan (ed.) Kyoto: Rinsen Shoten, 1999, pp. 357–60). Ōsu Bunko is the library of Shinpukuji, a temple that was founded by a monk of Watarai stock (Nōshin, 1291–1354) in the early 1330s, and that is famous for its collection of Shinto-related manuscripts. It should be noted, moreover, that there is at least one other (late-Kamakura) text with the title *Tenshō Daijin giki*, which quotes most of our *giki* but contains also much else; see Nishida Nagao (1957), pp. 344–51.

21 Vajrabodhi taught Amoghavajra (Ch. Bukong, 705–74), who in turn was the teacher of Kūkai's master Huiguo.

he is also known as Shōkōten, the "Shining Imperial Deva." In Japan, he is called Amateru Subeōngami. His title Tenshō or Amateru ("Heaven-Shining") is derived from yet another of his names, Dainichi Henjōson, "the All-Illuminating Honoured One of the Great Sun" – an alternative designation for Vairocana.

In Japan, the lifetime of Tenshō Daijin is limited to 105,000 years, and he has vowed to protect a thousand kings during this period. Thereafter, he will leave the world to the next buddha, Miroku (Sk. Maitreya). At the time of destruction that awaits the world at the end of this kalpa, he will return to the first meditation heaven. He will reveal his true appearance even to those without faith, and lift them to the first meditation heaven on the palm of his hand. There they will be able to listen to Maitreya's preaching.

Tenshō Daijin has eleven messengers, called the Eleven Princes (*ōji*). These Princes dwell in auxiliary shrines and other sub-shrines of the Ise shrines, together with their countless subordinates. The text lists their names, their Buddhist originals, and their shrines as follows:

1 Zuikō Tenshi (an emanation of Enra-ō), in the Aramatsuri shrine;
2 Ryūgū Tenshi (Nanda Ryūō), in the Takihara shrine;
3 Suijin Tenshi (Batsunanda Ryūō), in the Takimatsuri shrine;
4 Tenkan ("Magistrate of Heaven"), in the Tsukiyo shrine;
5 Chikan ("Magistrate of the Earth"), in the Tsukiyomi shrine;
6 Shimei, in the Izawa shrine;
7 Inin Tenshi or Izanagi (Shiroku), [in the Izanagi shrine];
8 Kōzan Tenshi (Taizan Fukun), in the Taka shrine;
9 Godō Daijin, in the [Takihara] Narabu shrine;
10 Kazenagashi no Kami, in Kaze no Miya shrine;
11 Okitama, a water deity (Suikan, "Magistrate of Water"), [in the Okitama shrine].

After having listed Tenshō Daijin's Eleven Princes, the text gives some instructions about their worship. When practising this ritual, one is to avoid all kinds of impurity, such as impurity caused by mourning, birth, or menstruation. Also, one must avoid Buddhist terms like buddha, sutra, monk, and pagoda, and use taboo-words instead.

Next, the text says a few words about the aims that can be achieved by performing the ritual. Those who have faith in this ritual will enjoy the "love of the king, his ministers, women, and magistrates." Those who shun impurity will flourish like (evergreen) trees, and their protective spirits will never desert them; but those who do not will be abandoned by the benevolent deities and wither like rotting trees.

This concludes the introductory part of the text. It is followed by a new title: "Sutra of the various mudras and mantras of Tenshō Daijin" (*Tenshō Daijin kakubetsu in-shingon kyō*), "compiled by the bodhisattva Kongōshu

(Skt. Vajrapāṇi)", another name for Kongōsatta (Sk. Vajrasattva).[22] This sutra first describes Tenshō Daijin's "basic mudra," which it describes as a "mudra of original enlightenment" (*hongaku-in*), and then reveals his mantra. He who chants this mantra three times a day will exhaust his bad karma, attain buddhahood, and fulfil his greatest wish. He who prays to the Realm of the Dead (*myōdō*) in the name of the sentient beings will be heard. Illness will be healed, wishes fulfilled, the desired will be attained, life will be prolonged, one will be loved by men, women, and by one's lord, one will attain fame and prosperity. Two more shorter spells (*ju*) end this section.

This is followed by the basic mudra (the "three-pronged *vajra*" mudra) and basic mantra (*kan sowaka*) of the Eleven Princes as a group. Next, each of these princes is invoked separately. They all share the same mudra (*renge gasshō*, folding the hands in the shape of a lotus), but have different spells. Additional information is given about each of the Eleven Princes, this time listed in a slightly different order:

1	Zuikō Tenshi	*tanyata hihora kyahei sowaka* brings benefits through rough, evil things
2	Ryūgū Tenshi	*on hihorahimarei sowaka* fulfils inner and outer wishes
3	Suijin Tenshi	*on kikan rikiri sowaka* bestows wisdom
4	Tsukiyo Tenshi	*on shaya kyahei sowaka* destroys evil
5	Tsukiyomi Tenshi	*on basara shihara kyōhei sowaka* bestows Wish-Fulfilling Gems
6	Izōgū (Izawa)	*on kyachi kikanei sowaka* grants what is desired
7	Izanagi-gū	*on chinrotahachi sowaka* takes away pain and bestows bliss
8	Taka	*on saruhahanha sowaka* alleviates the pain of childbirth
9	Narabu	*on sarukya kyanōhi shutanei sowaka* a deity of profound compassion
10	Okitama	*on kirikiri basara sowaka* bestows prosperity and longevity
11	Kaze no Miya	*on kenmari kenmari sowaka* grants food and clothes

22 Some details in this sutra differ slightly between the Kanazawa and Ōsu manuscripts. This paraphrase follows the Ōsu manuscript, which is most complete. The Kanazawa manuscript leaves out many details, noting that they are to be transmitted orally.

The text notes that this practice deviates from the usual in that it is not performed in front of an image. Rather, one uses the sun and the moon as the ritual's focus (*honzon*), or, alternatively, a "square mirror."

Finally, it is revealed that the deity of the Ise Outer Shrine, Toyouke, is the World Buddha Makabirushana (Sk. Mahāvairocana) on the highest level; the buddhas Yakushi (Bhaiṣajyaguru) and Amida (Amitābha) as well as the bodhisattvas Kannon (Avalokiteśvara) and Gakkō (Candraprabha) on the middle level; and the Earth Deity Kenrō on the lowest level. His ultimate transformation is the *Lotus Sutra*.[23] His mudra and mantra are revealed. The Ōsu manuscript concludes with the promise that those who chant this mantra a hundred thousand times will acquire magical powers (*siddhi*) and limitless riches. The Kanazawa manuscript mentions instead that mudras and mantras for other deities from the Outer Shrine precincts[24] are to be transmitted orally.

Analysis

The first fascicle of *Tenshō Daijin giki* follows the format typical of *giki* in general. It introduces the divinities that are the focus of the ritual, situates them in the context of the esoteric Buddhist pantheon, explains their special characteristics, and then records the mudras and mantras that can be used to activate their powers. The ritual described is an esoteric invocation (*nenju*), a practice that combines meditation (*nen*) with chanting (*ju*). While visualising a divine figure, the practitioner forms its posture with his hands and chants its spell, thus attaining union with the divinity. This enables him to unleash its divine powers, which will produce magical results for the ritual's sponsor, while at the same time helping the practitioner to realise instantaneously the enlightenment the divinity embodies.

In this case, not one but a string of deities is invoked in this manner. Somewhat excentrically, the divine figure to be used for the visualisation is for all these deities "the sun and the moon", or, alternatively, a "square mirror"; more clarity will be given first in the second fascicle. The ritual's mudras and mantras, which form the sacred core of the text, are listed separately as a "sutra," or a direct transmission of the words of the Buddha. Here, they are revealed by none other than Vajrasattva, the founding father of

23 This according to the Ōsu manuscript. The Kanazawa manuscript mentions a similar but shorter list of identifications: on the highest level, Dainichi of the Kongōkai, or Yakushi; on the middle level, Gakkō; on the lowest level, Kenrō. Here, the *Lotus Sutra* is not mentioned.

24 The manuscript lists an unidentified "female deity" (*megami*); Taka no Miya (the Outer Shrine's auxiliary shrine or *betsugū*); Kaze no Miya (raised to *betsugū* status in 1293); Tsuchi no Miya (raised to *betsugū* status in 1187); Ko no Miya (unidentified); Toyouke no Miya (the main shrine); and the Northern Gate, the main entrance to the Outer Shrine precincts.

esoteric Buddhism who first disclosed the teaching of the World Buddha to the world. We can list the deities invoked in the ritual as follows:

1 Tenshō Daijin (the deity of the Inner Shrine);
2 the "Eleven Princes" (deities of auxiliary and other sub-shrines of the Inner and Outer Shrines);
3 Toyouke (the deity of the Outer Shrine).

Tenshō Daijin is the main figure in the introductory section of the text. *Tenshō Daijin giki* identifies him as a Japanese manifestation of Brahmā, the highest king of the Realm of Form, which is situated immediately above the Realm of Desire in which we live.[25] His special mission is to protect Great Kings, and he will continue to do so until the end of this kalpa, when he will lead all sentient beings to his heaven to listen to the preaching of the next buddha, Maitreya. Tenshō Daijin figures here in two capacities: he rules our world from heaven, and protects the rulers of our own realm, the imperial line; but at the same time he also appears as a saviour of all sentient beings. When the world comes to an end, he will lead even the undeserving to his heavenly kingdom.

In comparison with Tenshō Daijin, the deity of the Inner Shrine, Toyouke of the Outer Shrine plays a minor role. There are significant differences between the Kanazawa and Ōsu manuscripts in the section on Toyouke, and the section as a whole appears as little more than an afterthought. Tellingly, Tenshō Daijin has at this point already been identified as the supreme deity who presides over the sub-shrines of both the Inner and the Outer Shrine.

But while Tenshō Daijin may feature as the supreme "King" in this fascicle, it is his "Eleven Princes" who form the ritual focus. The crux of the practice described in this *giki* lies in the invocation of these eleven deities. The Eleven Princes are described as Tenshō Daijin's "messengers," and are said to dwell in auxiliary shrines (*betsugū*) and other sub-shrines of the Inner and Outer Shrines of Ise.

Betsugū were Ise sub-shrines which received special worship from the court during important rituals. In contrast to lesser sub-shrines, the court covered the costs of the vicennial rebuilding of *betsugū*. Also, *betsugū* received state offerings, had their own dedicated priests, and had permanent shrine buildings of a certain size. The number of Ise auxiliary shrines stood at seven in 867; additions were made in 1187 (one), 1210 (one), and 1293 (two), bringing the total to eleven by the late Kamakura period.[26] *Tenshō Daijin giki* includes all of the seven *betsugū* of 867, but not the one added in 1187 – a fact that I have not seen mentioned in the secondary literature,

25 On Amaterasu as Brahmā, see Agatsuma Matashirō (1982) and Ogawa Toyoo (1997), pp. 146–51.

26 Sakamoto Kōtarō (1965), pp. 42ff.

but that offers yet another argument for dating the text to the twelfth century. To these seven, the text adds four lesser sub-shrines, bringing the total to eleven, eight of which are classified under the Inner Shrine and three under the Outer Shrine.[27]

Tenshō Daijin's Eleven Princes are not only situated in Ise sub-shrines, but also furnished with Buddhist identities. Strikingly, no less than eight of them are identified as deities in charge of the Realm of the Dead (*myōdō*). This fact is our main clue for understanding the ritual meaning of this *giki*.

Beliefs around a Realm of the Dead, and rituals to appease its masters, developed in Japanese aristocratic society from the late tenth century onwards, under Chinese influence.[28] Already in the *Nihon ryōiki* (*c*. 822) we can find Chinese-inspired tales featuring visits to Hell and encounters with its master, King Enma or Enra (Sk. Yama or Yamala), and his cruel retainers. In the late tenth century, a deity of Daoist origin, Taizan Fukun (Ch. Taishan Fujun), appeared as another central figure within the Realm of the Dead. In China, this deity was believed to be in charge of the sacred Mount Taishan in Shandong province, where he kept records of the lifetimes allotted to all human beings, and punished the dead for the misdeeds they committed during their lives on earth. Taizan Fukun became part of the Buddhist pantheon in China, and entered Japan in Buddhist garb, as Enma's chief minister.

These beliefs found expression in ritual offerings to Enma (*Enma-ten ku*, *Myōdō ku*) and Taizan Fukun (*Taizan Fukun sai*), which became popular among court aristocrats from the late tenth century onwards.[29] While *Enma-ten ku* was an esoteric Buddhist ritual, *Taizan Fukun sai* was performed by specialists of *onmyōdō* or "the Way of Yin and Yang" (called *onmyōji* or "Yin-Yang masters"), notably the Abe (or Tsuchimikado) lineage. The popularity of both rituals increased rapidly in the course of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. They were carried out to heal illness, to procure longevity, to avoid misfortune, or to secure an easy birth.

The first detailed ritual manual of *Enma-ten ku* can be found in *Betsugyō* vol. 7, by Kanjo (1057–1125).[30] On an altar with the usual esoteric

27 1. Aramatsuri, 2. Takihara, 5. Tsukiyomi, 6. Izawa, 7. Izanagi, and 9. Takihara Narabu (now read Takihara Narabi no Miya) were all the auxiliary shrines (*betsugū*) of the Inner Shrine, until the addition of the Kazahinomi shrine in 1293. 3. Takimatsuri and 11. Okitama are a water deity and an earth deity, worshipped in the form of rocks at different places within the Inner Shrine precincts. 8. Taka was the only auxiliary shrine of the Outer Shrine until 1187, when Tsuchi no Miya was added. 4. Tsukiyo (now Tsukiyomi) resorts under the Outer Shrine, and was raised to *betsugū* status in 1210. 10. Kaze no Miya is a sub-shrine in the Outer Shrine precincts raised to *betsugū* status in 1293.

28 For information on beliefs and rituals around the Realm of the Dead, I have relied on Hayami (1975), pp. 234–61.

29 The earliest mention of *Taizan Fukun sai* in Japan is (under the alternative name of *shichiken jōsō sai*) in *Jōshin kōki* entry for Engi 19 (919)/5/28. See Okada Shōji (1994), p. 654.

30 T 78, pp. 178–9.

implements, "porridge made of five kinds of grain" is placed in front of a south-facing image. After the usual preparatory rites, the practitioner visualises how the syllable A transforms into a palace decorated with seven kinds of treasures, containing a mandala with Enma's seed syllable *yaṃ* at its centre. This syllable transforms into a mudra that represents a staff with two human heads (*danda-in*), which in turn changes into King Enma. Enma is seated on a bull and carries the two-headed staff (called *danda*) in his left hand, while opening his right hand to receive wishes. Enma is surrounded by his consorts and subordinates, who are activated each in turn by means of mudras and mantras. "Five kinds of offerings" (unguents, chaplets, incense, food, and candles) are presented to them, and a candle planted in the porridge is lit. This represents the ritual's climax, and after this, the ritual is brought to a conclusion in the usual way.

Kanjo adds to his ritual instructions that Enma's palace is located in the northernmost part of the Iron Mountains which girth the outmost periphery of the universe. The *danda* staff stands in the centre of his court. The human heads that top the staff help Enma to judge the dead by spewing fire over the evil and white lotuses over the virtuous. Kanjo does not elaborate on Taizan Fukun's characteristics, but a slightly later manual describes him as "a demon who eats flesh and drinks blood." He carries the *danda* staff in his left hand, and notes down its judgements with a brush that he holds in his right hand.[31]

Of *Taizan Fukun sai* I have not found a detailed description, but it is not difficult to note some evident differences between this *onmyōdō* ritual and the Buddhist *Enma-ten ku*. Here, the offerings consist of gold and silver, silk, saddled horses, and "brave slaves," the last two represented by paper models. There is no visualisation practice, nor are mudras and mantras used to activate the deities; instead, they are merely requested to "descend and be seated,"[32] and to listen to a "letter of supplication" (*tojō*) read by the officiant. A considerable number of such supplication letters have been preserved, the oldest dating from 1050. They follow a set pattern: they commend the gifts offered by the ritual's sponsor to the deities of the Realm of the Dead, explain the problem for which the sponsor requires their help, and pray for their assistance in solving this problem, as well as for an increase in the sponsor's allotted lifetime.

The lists of deities addressed in *Enma-ten ku* and *Taizan Fukun sai* overlap. A comparison of deities who feature in these two rituals with *Tenshō Daijin giki* reveals that of the Eleven Princes of Tenshō Daijin, eight figure also among the twelve deities of *Taizan Fukun sai*, and five among the eleven deities of *Enma-ten ku*. Thus the *giki* agrees with *Enma-ten ku* on the number of deities to be invoked, but shares three more deities with *Taizan Fukun*

31 *Hizō konpōshō* by Jichiun (1105–60), T 78, p. 365.
32 Murayama Shūichi (ed.) (1987), p. 244.

sai.[33] Of the overlapping deities, Godō Daijin ("the Great Gods of the Five Realms") refers to magistrates of Enma who preside over the five realms of transmigration: hell, hungry spirits, beasts, human beings, and devas. Shimei and Shiroku are the names of two divine stars that keep records over the number of years and the fortunes allotted to all living beings. Tenkan, Chikan, and Suikan are Enma's "Magistrates of Heaven, Earth, and Water," but I have no more information about them.[34]

Concluding, we find that the Eleven Princes of Tenshō Daijin appear to have been selected largely from the list of deities invoked at *Taizan Fukun sai*. The ritual format is an esoteric Buddhist one, and therefore more similar to *Enma-ten ku*, but at the same time, we must note that *Tenshō Daijin giki* lacks the visualisation practice of *Enma-ten ku*, and that the mudras and mantras it uses are different.

At this point, we can begin to draw some conclusions about the first fascicle. It describes an esoteric *nenju* ritual for the invocation of Enma, Taizan Fukun and their retainers, patterned after, but at the same time studiously different from, existing rituals such as *Enma-ten ku* and *Taizan Fukun sai*. Most striking is that Enma is not situated in the periphery of the universe, but squarely within the imperial shrines of Ise. The Ise shrines have become the Palace of Enma, whence all the dead return to receive Tenshō Daijin's judgement. Enma is located in the Aramatsuri shrine, the first among the Inner Shrine's *betsugū*, and Taizan Fukun in the only *betsugū* of the Outer Shrine, the Taka shrine. These shrines were revered by the court as the dwelling places of Tenshō Daijin's and Toyouke's "violent spirits" (*arami-tama*) – the spirits that would punish the nation by causing disease, war, failed harvests, and other calamities. These were the spirits that embodied Tenshō Daijin's and Toyouke's *tatarigami* characteristics. They could cause the emperor to fall ill, or uprisings and epidemics to occur, and warned the nation of impending catastrophes through strange clouds or storms that damaged shrine buildings. Such omens were immediately brought to the attention of the court, which reacted routinely by ordering the performance of large-scale purification ceremonies.[35]

33 *Enma-ten ku: Enma*, two consorts, *Taizan Fukun*, *Godō Daijin*, *Shimei*, *Shiroku*, Dakini, Shamonda, Jōjusen, Shōten; *Taizan Fukun sai: Enra*, *Taizan Fukun*, *Godō Daijin*, *Tenkan*, *Chikan*, *Suikan*, *Shimei*, *Shiroku*, Honmyō, Kairo Shōgun, Tochi Reigi, Kashin Jōjin; *Tenshō Daijin giki: Enra*, *Taizan Fukun*, *Godō Daijin*, *Tenkan*, *Chikan*, *Suikan*, *Shimei*, *Shiroku*, Nanda Ryūō, Batsunanda Ryūō, [Kaze no Miya].

34 Of the remaining deities invoked in *Tenshō Daijin giki*, Nanda and Batsunanda (Sk. Nanda and Upananda) are two cosmic serpents who support Mount Sumeru. Their presence here is not easy to explain, but it is striking that later esoteric Ise texts claim that these snakes or dragons dwell under the central pillars of the Inner and Outer Shrines (see also the introduction to this volume, p. 49). The deity of Kaze no Miya, finally, is the only kami in the *giki* who for some reason has not been furnished with a Buddhist identity.

35 An example of the first is a famous incident from 729 (Jinki 6), when Emperor Shōmu fell ill because food offerings to the Inner Shrine had been defiled after passing a corpse left

In this *giki*, the violent spirits of Ise present themselves in the guise of the King of the Realm of the Dead and his retainers. They resort under King Brahmā, in the same way as the deities of the auxiliary shrines resort under Tenshō Daijin's main shrine. More information about their cosmic role is given in the second fascicle.

The second fascicle: Ise and the Heavenly Realm

Tenshō Daijin giki's second fascicle is alternatively titled *Tenshō Daijin giki ge* ("Commentary on the *Tenshō Daijin giki*"), or *Hōshi kashō kuden* ("Oral Transmission of the Abbot Baozhi"). Its aim is to set out the theological and karmic facts that sanctify the practice taught in the first fascicle. It will soon become clear, however, that this "commentary" is connected only precariously with the text it claims to elucidate.[36]

The second fascicle sets out by defining the Inner Shrine as Dainichi of the Taizōkai, and the Outer Shrine as Dainichi of the Kongōkai. The seven auxiliary shrines of the Ise shrines are the seven stars of the Big Dipper. Moreover, when one adds "four deities" (not further defined) and Tenshō Daijin himself, we have "Taizan Fukun's Twelve Magistrates of the Realm of the Dead" (*Taizan Fukun jūni myōkan*).

After this, the text relates the "karmic origin" (*engi*) of the ritual. In the past, when his rule over the world was disturbed, Tenshō Daijin retired into the Rock-Cave of Heaven, and the world was plunged into darkness. Then Tenshō Daijin, or the star Kisei,[37] transformed into the twelve years, the twelve months, the twelve protective deities, and the twelve hours of the day[38] in order to save the sentient beings. But because Heaven cannot speak, the sentient beings were unaware of this and committed evil. To admonish them, Tenshō Daijin/Kisei caused thunderstorms, epidemics, and natural disasters. The people led miserable lives, and fell into hell in their afterlives.

by the roadside. *Daijingū shozōjiki*, ST, vol. Jingū hen I, pp. 321–2. For examples of fear for uprisings and epidemics after irregularities at Ise, see Teeuwen (1996), pp. 102–3.

36 It was perhaps in order to strengthen this link that in some later recension, the alleged origin of the first fascicle was altered from a translation by Vajrabodhi to a transmission by Baozhi. At some point, the first fascicle of the *Tenshō Daijin giki* also came to be known as *Hōshi kashō den* ("Transmission of Abbot Baozhi"), a designation that appears as a subtitle to the *giki* in, for example, the Kanazawa Bunko manuscript.

37 Here, we find an ambiguous character combination, written 気里 (the verbal ending *-keri*, since it consistently occurs after *nari*?) in the Kanazawa manuscript, but 気星 (Kisei, the name of an unidentified star) in the two Jingū Bunko manuscripts. Yamamoto Hiroko (1994, pp. 72–4) chooses to read Kisei, and tentatively interprets it as another name for Jupiter (on the basis of the homophone 紀星), the planet that is associated with the Buddha Yakushi (Sk. Bhaiṣajyaguru). A passage at the end of the second fascicle, where Kisei and Yakushi are mentioned together, offers an argument in support of this interpretation. So does the fact that no other verbal endings are indicated in this way in the rest of the text.

38 These twelve hours are twice the length of our hours, and correspond to the twenty-four hours of our clock.

But we should not despair. One who has faith in the Heavenly Realm (*tendō*) will receive its protection even when set upon by all kinds of demons. In the Sun Disc, there are 84,000 benevolent deities who protect us with their benevolent light. Each of these deities has 84,000 generals, each of whom presides over 84,000 minor demons. The Moon Disc, too, has the same number of retainers.

The Heavenly Realm always helps the sentient beings. This Realm consists of the sun and the moon, the five planets (corresponding to the Five Phases of matter: wood, fire, earth, metal and water),[39] the twelve halls (where the sun stays during each of the twelve months of the year), the twenty-eight lunar mansions (corresponding to the twenty-eight days of the lunar month) and the thirty-six animals (three animals for each of the twelve hours of the day, corresponding to the same number of celestial stars).[40] Tenshō Daijin, we read, is the Realm of the Dead, which is identical to the Heavenly Realm.

At this point, the text appears to place the invocation practice (*nenju*) of the first fascicle in the context of an offering ritual (*kuyō*). To serve the Heavenly Realm, one must boil porridge on the first and fifteenth days of each month, and offer it to the sun and the moon, the five planets, and the twelve halls. One must meditate on Tenshō Daijin in the direction of the south-east, and recite the mantras of the various kami. Then, one will be given a dream, and one will be able to obtain happiness according to one's wishes. One must recite the following verse three times:

> The benevolent power of the sun and the moon
> is greater than that of all the buddhas of past, present and future,
> [because] without distinguishing between pure and impure,
> they spread their light of compassion everywhere.

At the climax of the ritual offering, one will see how the Heavenly Realm is opened, and how Tenshō Daijin leaves the Rock-Cave. Then, all human beings will serve Tenshō Daijin, and realise that his real appearance is as the sun and the moon.

Returning to *engi*-mode, the text here finally introduces Baozhi, presumably as the originator of the practice described in the *giki*. "At that time," we are told, Baozhi was moved to tears, and entering into meditation, Tenshō Daijin's real appearance was revealed to him. The Inner Shrine represents the 700 divinities of the Taizōkai mandala, and the Outer Shrine the 500 divinities of the Kongōkai mandala; the seven auxiliary shrines are the seventy-two

39 Here, it is worth noting that the "sun, moon and five planets" was also used as a designation for the seven stars of the Big Dipper. *Hokuto shichishō goma hiyō giki*, for example, states: "The Big Dipper is the essence of the sun, moon, and five planets" (T 21, no. 1306, p. 424).

40 These terms stem from standard Chinese astronomy, which identifies five planets, twenty-eight stellar mansions, thirty-six celestial stars and seventy-two terrestrial stars.

stars of heaven.[41] Baozhi placed the 700 divinities onto his robe with nine stripes, the 500 divinities onto his robe with seven stripes, and all stars of heaven onto his robe with five stripes. Then a wondrous voice resounded, reciting a verse. This verse praises the "Lotus King" (a title of Kannon, here embodied by Baozhi) for having left his "True Land" in order to save the sentient beings, and states that "we Birushana" (Dainichi, Sk. Vairocana) also wish to illuminate the world with "the light of our ten wisdoms."[42] Therefore, "you and I shall take turns illuminating the universe." Instantaneously, a ray of light emitted from Baozhi's forehead, revealing an image of the compassionate Kannon. Ever since that time, the text explains, Kannon and Dainichi have dwelt together in the palace of the Sun Disc. The palace of the moon, moreover, contains the Twelve Shining Buddhas, who transform into fifteen *dōji* (childlike figures, Sk. *kumāra*) and take turns illuminating the night.

Here, the text once more turns to the mysterious star Kisei. The compassion of the star Kisei is boundless, and because of Yakushi's original vow it protects us day and night. Kisei became "the king of Yakushi's twelve vows,"[43] these vows appeared as the Heavenly Realm, and shook the various buddhalands with surprise. The power of these vows produced the twelve Shining Buddhas,[44] who in turn created Yakushi's twelve Divine Generals who dwell in the moon palace.

This section is concluded with the remark that the ritual is to be performed in the same way as that of offering to Kokūzō (Skt. Ākāśagarbha) – who is generally identified with the morning star (Venus), and seen as the "original source" of sun, moon and stars.

The fascicle closes with a list of identifications. In the Realm of No Form, Tenshō Daijin/Kisei is the "Highest Heaven where there is Neither Thinking nor Non-Thinking" (*hisōten*); in the Realm of Form, Bonshuten; in the Realm of Desire, Taishakuten; in Southern India, Ryūju bosatsu (Nāgārjuna); in the palace of wondrous light, Hōyū bosatsu (?); in the golden realm (*konjiki sekai*), Monjushiri bosatsu (Mañjuśrī); on Mount Fudaraku (Potalaka), Kannon; in China, Taizan Fukun; in our land, Tenshō Daijin; in the Realm of the Dead (*myōdō*), Dōsojin; in the realm of the army of demons, King Enma; among the witch-animals, the heavenly fox-deity; in the Heavenly Realm, the sun and the moon; among the stars, the Pole Star; among human beings, the body of the Great King; in the realm of the exoteric teaching, the *Lotus Sutra*; in the realm of the esoteric teaching, the Daizuigu (Mahāpratisara) *dhāraṇī*; among the buddha lands, the Realm of the Lotus

41 Presumably the seventy-two "terrestrial stars" of Chinese astronomy.

42 The ten powers of understanding of a Tathāgata (=buddha), as listed in the *Flower Garland Sutra*.

43 The *Bhaiṣajyaguru sūtra* lists Yakushi's twelve vows; see e.g. Paul Williams (1989), p. 248.

44 This term (*jūnikōbutsu*) usually refers to Amida's "twelve titles of light," but here obviously relates to Yakushi's twelve vows.

Treasury; among the dragon palaces, the Manashi (Manasvi) dragon king; among the bodies of the buddha, Dainichi Henjōson. He takes on all these guises to preach about the Dharma methods, countless like the grains of sand in the river Ganges, for the benefit of the sentient beings, whom he wants to save by acquiring enlightenment above, while spreading beneficence below.

Analysis

If the first fascicle was a tangle, the second is even more complicated. Here, Tenshō Daijin takes on at least four guises:

1 Taizan Fukun, leading the "Twelve Magistrates of the Realm of the Dead";
2 the "Heavenly Realm" (*tendō*);
3 Yakushi (=Kisei?), leading the Twelve Shining Buddhas who embody his twelve vows;
4 Kannon = Baozhi

For the sake of clarity, I shall briefly discuss each of these four images of Tenshō Daijin separately.

Tenshō Daijin as Taizan Fukun

To what we have already heard about the Realm of the Dead in the first fascicle, not much is added here. What is new is that Tenshō Daijin and his Eleven Princes are now explicitly identified as the "Twelve Magistrates" that we encountered in *Taizan Fukun sai* manuals. It would appear that it is the number twelve that is most important here; it provides a link with the twelve years (whatever these may be), the months, hours, and so forth, and with Yakushi's Twelve Shining Buddhas.

Tenshō Daijin as "the Heavenly Realm"

In the next section, Tenshō Daijin appears first of all in the guise of the sun, the moon, and the stars of heaven, who both punish those who ignore Heaven's teachings and commit evil, and save those who place their faith in them. Here too, Tenshō Daijin appears in the role of mankind's supreme judge, who bestows rewards and punishments from his elevated realm. But while the main figures of the first fascicle were King Enma and his retainers, here it is the sun, moon, and stars that take centre stage.

While this sudden change of scene may surprise us, it makes excellent sense when seen within the context of the ritual world of the Insei period. Belief in the judging powers of stars, and rituals designed to influence their verdicts, gained popularity among court aristocrats in parallel with the

worship of the Realm of the Dead described above. Already in China, different traditions placed the Realm of the Dead either on this earth (e.g. on Mount Taishan), or in heaven among the stars. As we have already seen, the retinue of Enma and Taizan Fukun included the stars Shimei and Shiroku as record-keepers.

Two rituals in worship of fate-ordaining stars that gained popularity in the Insei period are *Hokuto hō* and *Sonshōō hō*. At the first, offerings were presented to the seven stars of the Big Dipper, of which one was identified as the personal star (*honmyō*) of the ritual's sponsor; the second focused on the Pole Star. Hayami Tasuku points out that these rituals were often performed in conjunction with *Enma-ten ku* or *Myōdō ku*, and also notes that offerings were made to the "Magistrates of the Realm of the Dead" as a part of *Hokuto hō* and *Sonshōō hō*. Hayami concludes that "the merging of beliefs in fate-ordaining stars and in Magistrates of the Realm of the Dead is a characteristic of the Buddhism of aristocratic society during the Insei period."[45]

The convergence between ritual offerings to the Big Dipper and the Magistrates of the Realm of the Dead is also made explicit in *Hokuto hō* ritual manuals. One such explains:

> *Rokumeisho* says: A deity called Shimei ascends to the Heavenly Thearch (Tentei) on every *kōshin* day,[46] to report on the sins of the people. Those who have committed grave sins have their remaining years suspended; those with light sins have years subtracted . . . To help those who suffer misfortune, short lifetimes, and baleful deaths, the Tathāgata preaches this ritual of offering to the seven stars of the Big Dipper, summoned by Ichijichōrinnō [i.e. the Pole Star].[47] By making these offerings, one will be able to make one's personal star postpone death and add years of life.[48]

Here, the Chinese star deity Shimei and his overlord the Heavenly Thearch are equated with the Big Dipper and the Pole Star, respectively. The Heavenly Thearch/Pole Star, moreover, performs the same role as King Enma in *Enma-ten ku*, namely that of the supreme judge of mankind, who retaliates against

45 Hayami (1975), pp. 252–4.

46 *Kōshin* (*kanoe saru*) is one of the sixty *eto* calendrical signs, which were used to count days or years. It is therefore sixty days from one *kōshin* day to the next.

47 The "Supreme Cakra King of One Syllable" is a figure in which the beneficence of all buddhas and bodhisattvas is concentrated, represented by the syllable *bhrūṃ*. That this title here refers to the Pole Star (*hokushin*, or, in Buddhist terms, Myōken, Sk. Sudṛṣṭi) is made explicit in the *giki*.

48 *Hokuto shichishō goma hiyō giki*, T 21, no. 1306, p. 425. Nakamura Hajime (*Bukkyō daijiten*, entry *Hokuto hō*, p. 4658) traces the passage quoted here to *Baopuzi*, *neibian* 6, a work explaining, among others, various methods to attain immortality written by Ge Hong in the first half of the fourth century.

sinners by reducing their lifetimes, and also by visiting various misfortunes upon them in their present lives.

Different esoteric lineages performed a great variety of offering rituals to the Big Dipper. In the visualisation practice that sets the stage for the offering, the officiant mentally transforms the syllables *aḥ* and *hrīḥ* into a palace and a lotus pedestal. On the pedestal, the syllable *bhrūṃ* transforms into a golden cakra, which turns and changes into Ichijichōrinnō. On each of the lotus leaves, the syllable *hūṃ* appears; these then transform into the stars of the Big Dipper, and into all the other stars of the firmament.[49] In most variants, rice is offered to the seven stars of the Big Dipper, and to four other stars or constellations determined on the basis of the astronomical profile of the sponsor and the timing of the ritual. As in *Enma-ten ku*, candles are planted in the rice bowls and lit to indicate consummation of the offerings. Not surprisingly, the prime aims of the ritual are to prolong life, and to avert misfortune.

Of special interest in this context is the relation between the Big Dipper and the Pole Star on the one hand, and Ise on the other. Yoshino Hiroko argues that under Emperor Tenmu (r. 672–86), the Outer and the Inner Shrines of Ise served as sanctuaries to the Big Dipper and the Pole Star, respectively.[50] If this is true (all evidence is circumstantial), it must be a notion that was abandoned soon after; worship of the Pole Star was forbidden by imperial decree in 796 for the reason that it involved "mingling of men and women." Especially, the inhabitants of the capital, the Home Provinces, and the provinces of Ōmi and Ise were on more than one occasion explicitly ordered not to worship the Pole Star when Imperial Dedicated Princesses (*saiō*) made their way to Ise to begin ritual service at the shrines.[51] This prohibition was finally laid down in *Engishiki* (927), which states that "when the Consecrated Princess is about to enter the Shrine of the Great Deity, from the first till the thirtieth day of the ninth month, it is forbidden to light sacred lanterns to the Pole Star in the capital, the Home Provinces and in Ise and Ōmi provinces, and to conduct mourning and funerals."[52] These decrees show that rituals in worship of the Pole Star enjoyed great popularity already in the early Heian period, and that they were regarded as vulgar and ritually polluting, and were therefore subject to a taboo, especially in connection with Ise. They imply that Pole Star rituals were tolerated at most times and places, but not in the ninth month, when the Consecrated Princess proceeded to Ise to participate in the important *kanname* ritual there.

In Ise, worship of the Pole Star was a traditional clan rite of the priests of the Outer Shrine, the Watarai. An image of the Pole Star in his Buddhist guise

49 *Kakuzensho*, T, Zuzō vol. 5, p. 409.

50 Yoshino Hiroko (1978) and (2000), ch. 2. See also Naumann (1994), pp. 41–5.

51 This prohibition was laid down first in 799, and is recorded in *Nihon kōki*, entry for Enryaku 18 (799)/9. See Satō Torao (1943), p. 194.

52 Felicia Bock's translation of the passage (1970, p. 167), which states that lanterns *are lighted*, is mistaken.

as Myōken (Sk. Sudṛṣṭi) was installed at the Okazaki shrine, located in the precincts of Jōmyōji, the clan temple of the so-called "second branch" of the Watarai, on the Obe hill midway between the Outer and Inner Shrines. An *engi* of this shrine can be found in *Kōkozō tō hishō* ("Secret record of Takakura and other matters"), a collection of various secret Watarai traditions probably compiled in the late thirteenth century but very likely drawing on earlier drafts.[53] This *engi* explains that an image of Myōken was found in the Obe river after a young daughter of a Watarai priest had drowned there in 859. After her father had the image installed, he was blessed with three pairs of male twins in the course of three years. The same text states that another Watarai priest received an oracle from "Myōken Sonshōō" (the Pole Star) in 888, urging him to worship the stars, sun, and moon. This was the (legendary) origin of the so-called *Yamamiya sai* or "Mountain Shrine festival," which was celebrated at Okazaki by Watarai clan members until the late Edo period. At this festival, the first Watarai priest led his kinsmen in a ritual of offering to Myōken, the sun and the moon, the twelve "divine kings" (no doubt protective deities for the twelve months of the year), and the twenty-eight lunar mansions, as well as Kujaku-ō (the "Peacock King"), a deity with special links to the fourth Watarai branch.[54] Strikingly, the offerings include the same "five grain porridge" also used in *Enma-ten ku*.[55]

Returning to the second fascicle, we find that Tenshō Daijin and his seven auxiliary shrines (representing the assembled deities of the Ise shrines) are here pictured as the Pole Star and its seven retainers, the seven stars of the Big Dipper. We have also seen that beliefs around these stars overlapped with beliefs in the Realm of the Dead, and that they were current in Ise (at least in Outer Shrine circles), but also at the court, and in society at large. Theologically, the second fascicle links the Pole Star and the Big Dipper to Tenshō Daijin and his Eleven Princes ("Taizan Fukun's Twelve Magistrates") by a simple sum: 7 (the Big Dipper, or the assembled auxiliary shrines of Ise) + 4 (the remaining of the Eleven Princes, maybe in some way corresponding to the four "personal" stars of *hokuto hō*?) + 1 (Tenshō Daijin) = 12. These twelve again correspond to the numerous "twelves" of Heaven: the twelve years, months, hours, and their respective protective deities, all of which confer cosmological significance on Tenshō Daijin and his retinue. However, the essence of Tenshō Daijin's role remains the same, whether he is envisaged as King Enma or the Pole Star: in both cases, he is the supreme arbiter of good and evil who passes down punishments and rewards. As the text explicitly states, the Heavenly Realm and the Realm of the Dead are ultimately one and the same.

53 An edition, with *kaisetsu*, can be found in *Ryōbu shintō shū*.

54 These deities are mentioned in *Kōkozō tō hishō*, in *Ryōbu shintō shū* p. 373. On Kujaku-ō and the fourth Watarai branch, see Yamamoto Hiroko (1989a), pp. 45–6.

55 Yamamoto Hiroko (1989b), p. 36.

Perhaps even more interesting than these theological matters is the additional ritual information offered in this part of the second fascicle. We learn for the first time that the *nenju* practice described in the first fascicle leads up to an offering ritual (*kuyō*). In the first fascicle, we saw that as the *honzon* of the practice, one should not use an image but the sun and the moon; here, it is revealed that the *nenju* is to lead up to an offering, again of porridge, to the rising sun ("in the south-east"). As the sun rises over the horizon, one recites a verse praising the sun rays as a "light of compassion" more powerful even than the beneficence of "all the buddhas of past, present and future." Then, one visualises how, as in the Age of the Gods, Tenshō Daijin emerges from the Heavenly Rock-Cave, and restores light to the world.[56]

Tenshō Daijin as Yakushi (= Kisei?)

In the same section that describes the various "twelves" Tenshō Daijin displays to save mankind, a first reference to an unidentified star Kisei appears. Seen in the context of this passage, "Kisei" can only be interpreted as another name for Tenshō Daijin in his guise as the Pole Star. Further down in the second fascicle, however, a somewhat unclear passage describes Kisei as "the king of [Yakushi's] twelve vows" (*jūnigan-ō*). Here, the twelve vows of Yakushi appear as yet another of Tenshō Daijin's salvatory "twelves." By implication, we are here offered yet another identification of Tenshō Daijin and his Eleven Princes: they are the twelve vows of Yakushi, embodied and put into practice by twelve Shining Buddhas and their twelve Divine Generals.

Yakushi, the "Healing Master," was one of the most popular buddhas of Japanese Buddhism from a very early date.[57] His sutras, the *Bhaiṣajyaguru* and *Saptabuddha* sutras (J. *Yakushi nyorai hongan kudoku kyō* and *Yakushi rurikō shichibutsu hongan kudoku kyō*), recount that he made twelve vows when he still was a bodhisattva, promising that those who invoke his name will, among other things, be cured of all diseases as well as other discomforts (such as being of the female sex), and be prevented from falling into the lower realms of transmigration. Yakushi has a Pure Land in the east, where the deserving may be reborn; but even the most wicked can call on him to attain a better rebirth. He is assisted by two bodhisattvas, "Sun Light" (Nikkō, Sk. Sūryaprabha) and "Moon Light" (Gakkō, Sk. Candraprabha), who lead the dead before his throne to partake of his compassion. In ritual practice, this meant that when a person was close to death, and his spirit was already being led before Enma, a ritual of offering lanterns and banners to Yakushi would still be able to ensure recovery and a prolonged life.

56 This could explain why the ritual should be similar to that of making offerings to Kokūzō, or the morning star, as stated further on in the second fascicle.

57 For an introduction to Yakushi beliefs and practices in Japan, see Gorai Shigeru, "Yakushi shinkō sōron," in Gorai Shigeru (ed.) (1986), especially pp. 7–12.

Further, Yakushi will protect those dedicated to him with the help of twelve Divine Generals and their armies. Especially, he promises kings that if they place their faith in him, their states will be able to escape the ravages of war, epidemics, and catastrophes due to bad weather or astronomical phenomena. Large-scale Yakushi rituals formed part of the thaumaturgical arsenal of the Japanese court, and were used to counter all kinds of disasters, ranging from the illness of members of the Imperial House to droughts, epidemics, and even the Mongol invasions.

The *Saptabuddha* sutra is of special interest here because it describes the vows and Pure Lands of seven buddhas. The first six of these were mostly identified as emanations of Yakushi himself, who is the seventh on the list. The ritual practice linked to these seven Yakushi (*shichibutsu Yakushi hō*) was almost exclusively limited to the court, where it was performed by Tendai ritualists for the purposes of ensuring the health (or, in the worst case, a happy rebirth) for members of the Imperial House, and maintaining peace in the realm.

A hint as to the reason why the seven Yakushi are important here can be found in a passage on the "Seven stars of the Big Dipper" in the Okazaki *engi* in *Kōkozō tō hishō*. Here, the stars of the Big Dipper are identified in three ways: as emanations of Dainichi; of the seven Yakushi; and of the six Kannon plus Kokūzō.[58] Although there is uncertainty about the dating of this *engi*, it gives us a valuable hint as to the rationale behind the appearance of Yakushi in this second fascicle. In the same way as the twelve vows of Yakushi correspond to the twelve deities of Ise, the seven Yakushi are identical to the seven stars of the Big Dipper, who, in turn, represent the seven auxiliary shrines of Ise.

Clearly, the second fascicle attempts to integrate Yakushi beliefs in this ritual of making offerings to Tenshō Daijin at dawn. Was it perhaps for this reason that he here takes on the unusual guise of a star? We need to ask ourselves what kind of Yakushi beliefs informed this attempt. Was it Yakushi's prominent role in rituals for the emperor's physical well-being and the protection of the state that made him relevant in an Ise context? Or was Yakushi an obvious component of the ritual repertoire performed for the sick and dying, and therefore also a logical element of worship of Ise as the Realm of the Dead? Unfortunately, all of these questions will have to remain open.

58 *Ryōbu shintō shū*, pp. 373–4. For the six Kannon, see p. 140. The fact that both these Kannon and Kokūzō appear both in the Okazaki *engi* and in *Tenshō Daijin giki* in connection with the Big Dipper may well be significant. Also, it is worth noting that the *honzon* of Jōmyōji, to whom the Okazaki shrine was connected, was Yakushi (Nishikawa Kazutami, 1985, p. 5).

Tenshō Daijin as Kannon = Baozhi

The legendary Chinese monk Baozhi appears quite abruptly in the second half of the second fascicle. We have just been told how to make offerings to the rising sun, which dispells the darkness of the night as Tenshō Daijin did when he emerged from the Rock-Cave of Heaven; then, Baozhi is suddenly introduced as the sanctifying originator of this ritual. "At this time," the text reads, "the abbot [here still unnamed] was startled and moved to tears." It is implied that it was Baozhi who, by performing the ritual described in *Tenshō Daijin giki*, lured Tenshō Daijin out of the Rock-Cave, and thus restored his rule over the world. Also, we learn that Baozhi is an emanation of the bodhisattva Kannon, and that "ever since" he has dwelt in the Sun Disc together with Dainichi. Together, these two divinities have illuminated the world with their light of wisdom and compassion since the time, *in illo tempore*, when Tenshō Daijin emerged from the Rock-Cave of Heaven.

Who was the Abbot Baozhi, and what was his role in Japanese lore? Baozhi (418–514) was a Chinese monk famous for his miracle-working and his enigmatic prophesies. A legend that was well known in China and Japan alike tells that when painters wanted to paint his portrait, he "tore open his forehead with his nails, revealing the golden face of a bodhisattva."[59] Already in eighth century China, Baozhi was widely revered as an emanation of the Eleven-Faced Kannon. When the monk Kaimyō (dates unknown) returned from Tang China in 780, he brought along a statue of Baozhi which was installed in the Daianji in Nara; an aristocratic pilgrim who visited the temple in 1106 described it as "an image of Abbot Baozhi tearing open his face."[60]

In Japan, it was also said that the kami had revealed to Baozhi a poem that prophesied the downfall of the Japanese state (*Yamatai shi*, "Poem on Japan," or *Hōshi shin*, "Baozhi's prophesy").[61] This poem was discussed already at court lectures on the *Nihon shoki* in 936, and later formed an important element of the so-called "medieval *Nihongi*," a fluid body of legends and myths that all but replaced the original *Nihon shoki* in the course of the Kamakura period. *Yamatai shi* and commentaries on it also formed part of medieval Shinto lineages (e.g. at Miwa and Hasedera), where initiations took place into the sacred meaning of Baozhi's prophesy. Boazhi, then, was a well-known figure in Buddhist kami lore. He was an emanation of Kannon, to whom the Japanese kami had revealed the future of the Japanese imperial state. In both of these capacities, he was an obvious candidate for amalgamation with Tenshō Daijin.

59 In Japan, this legend can be found in *Uchigiki shū* (early twelfth century) and *Uji shūi monogatari* (early Kamakura period). On Baozhi in China, see Berkowitz (1995).

60 See Itō Satoshi (1996), pp. 270–1. The statue at Daianji has since been lost, but a copy of it "from the Fujiwara period" (897–1192) is still enshrined at Saiōji in Kyoto.

61 On this poem, see Komine Kazuaki (1993) and Fukazawa Tōru (1995).

Kannon (Sk. Avalokiteśvara) was perhaps the most popular bodhisattva of all. He figures prominently as one of the two assistant bodhisattvas of Amida (together with Daiseishi, Sk. Mahāsthāmaprāpta), and the Amida sutras describe how he descends to our world to meet the dying and lead them to Amida's Pure Land. He also has his own chapter in the *Lotus Sutra*, where in his endless compassion he saves all sentient beings, including the evil, from all kinds of woes. The *Flower Garland Sutra*, moreover, describes Kannon's dwelling-place on Mount Potalaka (J. Fudaraku) in the distant east, which served as a Pure Land in itself. Kannon appeared in many guises, responding to the needs of the sentient beings; of special importance in Heian Japan was the belief that six forms of Kannon save the sentient beings in the six realms of transmigration.

In Japan, faith in Kannon as a saviour who prevents the sentient beings from falling into the evil realms developed rapidly in the course of the tenth century. In the Insei period, however, esoteric Kannon rituals (such as *roku-jikyō hō*), performed to cure illness, secure a safe birth, and attain various benefits in this life, became more prominent.[62] In the context of *Tenshō Daijin giki*, it is perhaps significant that in the eleventh century, it became customary to present offerings to both the seven Yakushi and the six Kannon in a single, combined ritual, mainly to pray for recovery from illness.

Also relevant here is the fact that Kannon was associated with the sun.[63] Already in Chinese commentaries on the *Lotus Sutra* by Tiantai patriarchs such as Zhiyi (538–97) and Jizang (549–623), the moon (J. Gattenshi) is identified as Daiseishi, the morning star (Myōjō Tenshi) as Kokūzō, and the sun (Nittenshi) as Kannon. Drawing both on these commentaries and on various apocryphal Chinese cosmological sutras, in Japan the notion arose that Amida had ordered Kannon and Daiseishi to illuminate the world as sun and moon.[64] This is a clear parallel to the belief that the sun and the moon lead the souls of the dead in front of Yakushi, as mentioned above. A ritual practice worshipping Kannon as the sun appears in various sources of Shugendō and Buddhist Shinto from the Kamakura period onwards, and involved addressing the rising sun with a verse in praise of Nittenshi/Kannon.

The notion that Tenshō Daijin is an emanation of Kannon can be traced back at least to the early eleventh century. But although various Kannon-related beliefs may shimmer in the background of *Tenshō Daijin giki*, they

62 Hayami Tasuku, "Heian jidai ni okeru Kannon shinkō no henshitsu," in Hayami Tasuku (ed.) (1982), esp. pp. 200–7.

63 See Itō (1996), pp. 256–60.

64 In Zhiyi's *Fahua wenju*, T 34, p. 24, and Jizang's *Fahua yishu*, T 34, p. 464. The Japanese reference is to *Hyakuza shuhō ippyaku hōdan kikigakishō*, which records a lecture delivered in 1110. This lecture explains that an (unknown) sutra with the title *Sutra of the Four Castles on Mount Sumeru* (*Xumi sicheng jing*) tells that when the world was still empty, Amida called together all bodhisattvas and decided that Kannon would illuminate the day as Nittenshi, and Daiseishi the night as Gattenshi. Itō (1996), p. 256.

seem somewhat removed from the *giki*'s main concerns. Here, Baozhi figures as a symbol of mythical and cosmological dimensions, who gathers the divinities of the two mandalas and all the stars of heaven on his robes. Also in this passage, prime importance is given to worship of the sun, moon, and stars. Baozhi personifies the sun, and illuminates the world clad in robes that contain all the deities of the esoteric universe, embodying, it would seem, the stars of heaven. Thus Tenshō Daijin appears as the "Heavenly Realm" also here, where he is cast as Baozhi.

Discussion

How can we characterise *Tenshō Daijin giki*, and what does it reveal about the medieval Amaterasu as sketched by Satō Hiroo?

Tenshō Daijin giki describes an esoteric Buddhist ritual with strong *onmyōdō* influences. The ritual takes place at dawn, and begins by summoning Tenshō Daijin and the deities of eleven auxiliary and sub-shrines of Ise with the help of mudras and mantras (*nenju*). This is followed by an offering rite (*kuyō*), in which porridge is the main offering, and by the chanting of a verse which praises the light of the "sun and moon" as superior to the compassion of all buddhas: unlike the buddhas, the sun and moon do not distinguish between the pure and the impure. The ritual reaches its climax when the sun rises in the south-east. The rising sun is envisaged as Tenshō Daijin, emerging from the Rock-Cave of Heaven to restore his rule over the world.

Tenshō Daijin, or the sun, is defined in terms of a variety of Buddhist figures. The first fascicle identifies Tenshō Daijin as King Brahmā, and his "violent spirits" (residing in the main auxiliary shrines of the Inner and Outer Shrines) as King Enma and Taizan Fukun, the lords of the Realm of the Dead (*myōdō*). In the second fascicle, the sun, moon, and stars are called the "Heavenly Realm" (*tendō*). This Realm brings order to the natural world, and at the same time controls the fate of all sentient beings by punishing evil and rewarding good. Here, Tenshō Daijin appears as the Pole Star, leading the seven stars of the Big Dipper (equated to the seven auxiliary shrines of the two Ise shrines) as well as all other stars. Finally, Tenshō Daijin is equated to Yakushi and Kannon, who are also described as stars or masters of stars. Yakushi appears as an unidentified star named Kisei (the Pole Star, or Jupiter?), and as the seven stars of the Big Dipper; Kannon as the Chinese Abbot Baozhi, allegedly the very originator of the practice, who gathers the countless stars of heaven onto his robes and resides in the sun together with Dainichi, spreading his compassionate light for the benefit of the sentient beings.

This brief summary alone suggests that *Tenshō Daijin giki* was not composed by one person on a single occasion; rather it draws on a range of beliefs that developed over time. The first fascicle is relatively straightforward

in equating the deities of Ise with the rulers of the Realm of the Dead and their retainers. The second fascicle builds on this, but adds beliefs centring on the Big Dipper, Yakushi, and Kannon, integrating them in the ritual by using the "Heavenly Realm" (the sun, moon, and stars) as an overarching theme. This Heavenly Realm is again identical to the Realm of the Dead, so that in all his different guises, Tenshō Daijin consistently operates as the supreme judge of mankind, who, if properly venerated, will save the sentient beings from a rebirth in an evil realm.

In the Amaterasu/Tenshō Daijin of this *giki*, we recognise many of the medieval characteristics outlined by Satō Hiroo. We find that the *tatarigami*-like qualities of Amaterasu, represented by the deity's "violent spirit," have been transformed; this spirit now appears as the supreme judge of the dead, who also dispenses punishments and rewards to the living. Also, while Amaterasu retains elements of his classical role as the protector of the imperial lineage, this is not the capacity in which he is made ritually effective. Rather, the *giki* represents Amaterasu as a deity with supreme authority over very personal matters that concern all humans: longevity, rebirth, and punishments and rewards both in this life and the next.

Tenshō Daijin giki also sheds new light on the oath quoted by Satō. Satō interprets the list of divine powers in this oath as a vertical run-through of the universe, and expresses his surprise at finding deities like Enma and Taizan Fukun, whom he places in a subterranean hell, above Amaterasu.[65] The *giki* places the deities of the Realm of the Dead in the Heavenly Realm, and thus solves this problem. More fundamentally, though, the *giki* equates nearly all deities mentioned in this oath to Amaterasu or, at least, places them in an Ise sub-shrine. This impresses upon us that the oath does not merely list a number of well-known deities in order of prominence, or physical location. The deities invoked here formed a highly coordinated divine realm. According to the *giki*, they are all part of Amaterasu and his entourage; they can be worshipped at a single site, and activated in a single ritual.

More problematic is Satō's view on Amaterasu's relatively minor position within the wider cosmos, as the "mere" lord of the "wrathful deities" of Japan. Following Satō's definition of wrathful deities, one would expect Tenshō Daijin to be worshipped as a kami in charge exclusively of this-worldly matters: Satō's hypothesis would preclude a wrathful deity from handling otherworldly concerns such as rebirth and salvation. Satō developed the concept of wrathful deities on the basis of his analysis of medieval oaths; but it now becomes clear that another angle on the kami, through ritual manuals, does not necessarily confirm his conclusions. In this *giki*, Amaterasu is both a saving and a wrathful deity at the same time. Amaterasu is equated with divinities on all levels, from the "highest Realm of the Lotus Treasury"

65 Satō Hiroo (2000), pp. 145–6.

above, where he appears as Dainichi, to the realm of man, where he appears as the "body of the Great King." Here, the paradigm of *honji suijaku* does not serve as a "way of binding together the two categories of saving deities and wrathful deities,"[66] and thus of construing a coherent cosmic order. Rather, its effect is to dissolve the conventional hierarchical structure of the universe, by equating its most elevated level with its most worldly. In redefining Amaterasu, the authors of this *giki* were not in the least hindered by the *honji suijaku* idea that the kami are local footmen of Buddhist superiors. Rather, it would seem that the *honji suijaku* paradigm offered them a way to expand Amaterasu's divine authority limitlessly, from the highest level of abstraction (as Dainichi) to that of tangible, this-worldly reality (as the secular King, or even a fox).

The last question I would like to raise in conjunction with Satō's discussion is whether concern with imperial authority was a significant factor behind the emergence of the new, medieval Amaterasu. To me, this would not appear to be the case. The figure of Amaterasu as the judge of the dead was not designed to boost the dwindling authority of the imperial institution in an age of warrior dominance. Its function must be sought in a completely different realm: that of private worship.

The Insei period was a time in which aristocratic and warrior élites used religious ritual to an unprecedented degree, both in their political battles and in their personal struggles with illness, bad fortune, or other evil influences. Hayami Tasuku has drawn attention to what can perhaps be described as a twelfth century ritual arms race among aristocrats.[67] Rituals were expanded and embellished, rituals from different traditions but with similar aims were combined into new, large-scale performances, and novel rituals focusing on little-known divinities were taken into use. Esotericised *onmyōdō* rituals invoking fate-ordaining stars and planets and worship of the deities of the World of the Dead are but two examples of such private rituals.

Another, not discussed by Hayami, was the spread of personal worship of kami. Until the mid-Heian period, shrines were primarily sites for seasonal, communal festivals, and were visited only by official representatives of the clan or the state, who were present to participate in official rituals. This changed only in the course of the eleventh century, when the practice of making private offerings and, somewhat later, pilgrimages to shrines began to spread.[68] The identification of kami with Buddhist divinities gave meaning to this form of shrine worship: the kami were addressed not only as protectors of the clan and its territory, but also as Buddhist-type divinities who could reverse bad karma, destroy evil demons, and even provide access to a Buddhist paradise.

66 See Satō's chapter in this volume, p. 108.

67 Hayami (1975).

68 See Mitsuhashi Tadashi (2000), ch. 1.

The new Amaterasu that appears in *Tenshō Daijin giki* would seem to have emerged in the context of such developments. It remains unclear whether this happened at the court, where Ōnakatomi priests may have taken the initiative to design a new form of private Ise worship, or in the areas around Ise Bay and the Kantō, where Ise priests of all descriptions offered their services to local élites and tried to inspire them to donate their lands to the Ise shrines. What is clear is that the image of Amaterasu as the supreme judge of the dead served very concrete ritual purposes over a prolonged period of time. Striking evidence of this can be found in *Bikisho* (1324), a digest of esoteric teachings around Tenshō Daijin. Let me conclude this chapter with a passage from this text which demonstrates that the same image of Amaterasu found new use in the fourteenth century – but this time as a theological rationale for the newly popular practice of making a pilgrimage to Ise:

> [Tenshō Daijin] appears as King Enma after our fates have run out and our lives are over. He weighs the good and evil we have done and remonstrates us . . . It is for this reason that all sentient beings of our land, even if they have to cross the sea and split the clouds, must know of the meaning [of the Ise shrines] and make a pilgrimage there. Because they do not know of it and do not have faith in it, they fail to do so; but it is a natural principle that all those who have life will die, and it is the ultimate teaching of this shrine that all the sentient beings of the trichiliocosmos, without a single exception, will after their deaths appear in front of the deity of the Great Shrine of our land.[69]

69 ST, vol. Shingon Shintō ge, pp. 508–9. *Bikisho* draws partly on information given to a monk named Jibu Risshi, by the Outer Shrine priest Watarai Tsuneyoshi (1263–1339); see Kadoya Atsushi (1993). Tsuneyoshi personally compiled a set of rules for pilgrims from Mino and Owari (*Bunpō no ki*, 1318), and it would seem likely that this theory originated with Outer Shrine priests who used it to promote pilgrimage.

6

HONJI SUIJAKU AND THE LOGIC OF COMBINATORY DEITIES

Two case studies

Iyanaga Nobumi

Introduction

In their introductory chapter, the editors of this volume write that the Japanese *honji suijaku* is a "combinatory system." Indeed, the mythical world of Japanese Middle Ages shows us an inextricable amalgam of deities and symbols of all imaginable origins, Indian, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, from the folklore of the "populace" to the elaborated rites of the courtly culture or subtle doctrines of the learned monks. In a sense, this is not surprising, since any mythical corpus of a given culture, in a given period, can be described as an "inter-referential system ad infinitum" – this is at least the image that I could get from reading the mythological studies of Claude Lévi-Strauss, and also from my own study of Buddhist mythology in general.[1]

However, the situation in medieval Japan seems somewhat more specific. Let me explain. I think that we can distinguish several kinds or levels within the mythical corpus, depending on the levels of consciousness in its elaboration. The first level, which I would call the "raw level," would be a collection of mythical tales and rites that priests and old persons would tell or perform at village festivals or at night around a fire. (I am not sure whether this kind of mythical corpus really exists or can be grasped, at least in historical researches. It may be rather a theoretical possibility.) The second level would be the "normal" mythical corpus, represented by the works of Homer, Hesiodos, or the *Mahābhārata*, Purāṇa texts, Japanese classical mythology,

1 See Iyanaga Nobumi (2002a) and (2002b).

etc. These mythologies have been elaborated with (more or less clear) consciously religious and/or political purposes, by using materials from the "raw level." The third level, which is much more rare, can be observed only in a few cultures, for instance in the Hellenistic period in the Mediterranean world, or in the late Renaissance or baroque periods in European culture, and in what we can call the "*kenmitsu taisei* episteme" in medieval Japan.[2]

All these cultures were in some "crisis of consciousness." A period of intensive philosophical development had just finished; enormous changes in the society were taking place, and the members of the élites were no longer sure of themselves. Based on the high-level metaphysical system that had been built up in the previous age, they elaborated a sophisticated system of interpretation of their own "classical" mythology, often known as "allegorical interpretation." This happened because they could no longer believe naïvely in their mythology but needed it to authenticate their own legitimacy, in an existential (and, of course, also ideological, religious, and political) sense. Thus, they began to forge a new mythical corpus, using the elements of this philosophical exegesis of the "classical" mythology, along with elements they picked up from everywhere they could, especially from folklore or "low culture." Once this process of creation of a new "artificial mythology" begins, people from every social stratum can join the élite class in producing new myths, new tales, and new symbols. I think this is at least one of the reasons why we can get a similar impression when we read a magical papyrus of the Hellenistic period, myths found in Plutarch's writings, mythical/doctrinal elaborations in the *Keiran shūyōshū* or some myths in works of the Ise Shinto tradition.[3]

The pantheon of the Yushima Tenjin/Shinjōin complex

Here, I will begin with a very familiar example – familiar for me, at least, because I live near the shrine-temple complex that will be the starting point of this chapter. The shrine is a very famous one, Yushima Tenjin, near to Hongō and Ueno in Tokyo. Outside the garden of plum trees, there are steps named Otokozaka, and at the bottom of the steps, on the left, there is a little temple named Shinjōin. While the shrine is an old-style large building, the temple is a little modern building, without any special artistic interest. However, there is a placard describing the history of the temple,

2 Perhaps we can also add to this category of cultures the period of formation of tantric religions in India. On the concept of "*kenmitsu* episteme," see Rambelli (1994).

3 The study of this "artificial mythical corpus" of medieval Japan is only beginning, but there are already several seminal studies. We can find a good overview in Yamamoto Hiroko (1998a); and a good bibliography in *Kokubungaku: Kaishaku to kanshō*, March 1999, special issue "Nihongi no kyōju: kodai kara kinsei e."

which I found very interesting. It says that the temple is the seventh of the Thirty-three pilgrimage sites of Avalokiteśvara in Edo (Edo sanjūsan Kannon fudasho), dedicated to the Eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara (Jūichimen Kannon). It was founded in the seventh year of Genroku (1694) by a Tendai monk, Yūkai, who was the *bettō* (administrator of a Buddhist temple affiliated to a Shinto shrine) of Yushima Tenjin at that time. It is now named Shinjōin, i.e. the Temple of the Castle of the Heart, and belongs to the Tendai sect, but before the Meiji period, it was named Hōju Benzaiten dō ("Hall of Wish-fulfilling Jewel-holding Sarasvatī"), and was included in the precincts of Yushima Tenjin. At the beginning of the Meiji Restauration, it was forcefully separated from the "mother" shrine. This temple is known also as a pilgrimage site of Shōten (or Shōden), the Buddhist form of the Hindu elephant-headed god Gaṇeśa, the son of Śiva. The placard says in addition that Sugawara no Michizane (845–903), who later became Tenjin, "had a profound belief in Shōten; it was for this deep karmic relationship (*asakaranu innen*) between Tenjin and this deity" that a cult to Shōten was established at the Yushima Tenjin shrine. The statue of Shōten is supposed to have been created by Jikaku Daishi, *alias* Ennin (794–864), and brought there from Mount Hiei. The main objects of worship (*honzon*) of the temple are Daishō Kangiten (i.e. Shōten) and the Eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara; other deities worshipped there are Hōju Benzaiten and Shusse Daikokuten (Mahākāla of success in life);[4] there is also a little altar for Toyokawa Dakini shinten (i.e. the deity Inari) with two little statues of foxes; to the side of the main building there is also a little statue of the bodhisattva Jizō (Kṣitigarbha).

Thus, we find here a number of deities who were associated with one another: Tenjin (the vengeful spirit of Sugawara no Michizane, who later became the god of literature), the Eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara, Shōten/Gaṇeśa, and Sarasvatī (holding the Wish-fulfilling Jewel), along with Daikokuten (Mahākāla), Dakiniten (*ḍākinī*),[5] and Jizō. What is the key, or the reason, or the "deep karmic relationship" behind all these associations?

First link: from Tenjin to Avalokiteśvara

Considering the date of foundation of the temple – the well-known Genroku era, when popular culture of downtown Edo was in full bloom – and given

4 As a side note, it is interesting to note here that in Buddhist terminology, *shusse* means "out of or beyond the profane world" (Sk. *lokottara*), rather than "success in life."

5 It is important to distinguish between the Indian female demons called *ḍākinī* and the Japanese individualized deity called Dakini-ten; while the former (that I will write hereafter with lower-case italic letters) is a common noun of a class of beings, the latter (that I will write with a capital letter, in plain text style) is a deity associated with Inari. See Iyanaga (1999b), pp. 41–2, 70–1.

the area in town where it is located (Yushima was, and remains, a neighborhood well known for commerce and pleasure), at first glance, it is possible to think of this group of deities as a little pantheon of the gods of fortune of the Edo period.[6] But is this sufficient? Can't we go further, and search for some "deeper" reasons for these associations?

First of all, despite what the placard of the temple says, it seems that there is no good evidence for the fact that Michizane had a special devotion for Shōten. However, it is known that in the *honji suijaku* system, some texts connected Tenjin with Kannon. For example, Jien (1155–1225) writes in his *Gukanshō* that "Tenjin is surely a transformation body of Avalokiteśvara, who wanted to protect closely (*majikaku*) the Royal Law during the final period of the Dharma."[7] A legend transmitted in the Sugawara family also says that Michizane, when he was a young boy, had a weak constitution, and thus his mother made a vow to Avalokiteśvara that she would make a statue if her prayers for a better health for her son were answered. This could have been the reason for Michizane's deep devotion for this bodhisattva.[8] Michizane was more directly linked to the Eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara because (according to a biography written in 1106 by a member of the Sugawara family, Nobutsune) the temple built at the site of his tomb at Dazaifu, Anrakuji, was a "place of miracles" (*reiō no tokoro*) of this form of Avalokiteśvara.[9] In the oldest version of the *Kitano Tenjin engi* (the so-called *Kenkyū-bon* because it seems to have been composed before 1194 during the Kenkyū era), it is stated that the *honji* of Tenjin was the Eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara.[10]

Now, if there really is a link between the spirit of Michizane and the Eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara, it would be easy to establish a connection also

6 By the way, it is not certain that all these gods were there since the time of the foundation. In particular, the statue of Jizō may have been added later; he seems to be of a somewhat different nature from the other five deities and I will not consider his case here. The association between Avalokiteśvara with a Thousand Hands and a Thousand Eyes (Senju-sengen Kannon) and Kṣitigarbha is attested from the Tang period in China. Kobayashi Taichirō explains it as a kind of marriage between Heaven, represented by the Thousand *brilliant* Eyes of Avalokiteśvara, and Earth, represented by Kṣitigarbha, a marriage with strong erotic connotations. See Kobayashi Taichirō (1974), in particular "Tōdai no Daihi Kannon," pp. 99–100; "Tōdai no guku Kannon," pp. 201–4; "Nara-chō no Senju Kannon," pp. 233–6; "Senju shinkō no minkanteki chōryū," pp. 272–3, pp. 278–9. In Japan, it seems that the Eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara is often confused with Avalokiteśvara with a Thousand Hands and a Thousand Eyes, so that the association between the Eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara and Kṣitigarbha may contain the symbolical value of Avalokiteśvara with a Thousand Hands and a Thousand Eyes. Shirasu Masako remarks that the Eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara is often "combined" with the bodhisattva Kṣitigarbha (1992, p. 27).

7 *Gukanshō*, NKBT 86, p. 155; quoted in Takeuchi Hideo (1968), p. 21.

8 See Takeuchi Hideo (1968), p. 20; Borgen (1994), p. 66.

9 Takeuchi Hideo (1968), p. 22, quoting the biography entitled *Kanke go-denki* (in GR, Tome 2, Jingi-bu, p. 171a14–16).

10 See Kasai Masaaki (1973), pp. 69, 119.

between Tenjin and Shōten, because there is a well-known Buddhist myth associating the Eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara with Gaṇeśa (variously known in Sino-Japanese Buddhism as Vināyaka and Gaṇapati, or Shōten and Kangiten). What follows is a translation of this myth, which is found at the beginning of a Tantric ritual text dedicated to the so-called Double-bodied Vināyaka, supposedly translated by Śubhakarasiṃha (active 717–35):[11]

> The Great Saint Jizaiten (Sk. Mahārya Īśvara?) is the *devarāja* Maheśvara. He had Umā as his wife, and had three thousand children. King Vināyaka was the foremost of the 1,500 on the left. He practiced every sort of evil deed and commanded a host of 107,000 evil deities [called *vināyakas*]. Sennayaka, a *deva* who held to the good, was the first among the children of the right side. He practiced all good deeds and was the leader of a group of 178,000 followers who fostered fortune, skill, and good. This King Sennayaka was actually a transformation body of Avalokiteśvara, who, in order to subdue[12] the evil actions of King Vināyaka, was born simultaneously with Vināyaka so that they would be younger and elder brothers, husband and wife (*tongsheng yilei, cheng xiongdi fufu*). Their iconic shape is two bodies united in embrace.

Here, the meaning of the expression "becoming younger and elder brothers, husband and wife" is not very clear. It should probably be understood as "becoming elder brother and younger *sister*, and husband and wife." If so, this was perhaps a myth of incestuous marriage. On the other hand, it is simply said here that Avalokiteśvara was born as a sister and became the wife of Vināyaka, and there is no specific mention of the Eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara. It is not certain that this text was translated by Śubhakarasiṃha; it seems rather that it was written directly in Chinese (but the author might be Śubhakarasiṃha himself or someone in his entourage). In fact, comparing this text to another one certainly written by Hanguang, a disciple of Amoghavajra, in 747, it becomes clear that the text ascribed to Śubhakarasiṃha was probably written in China, very likely before the time of Amoghavajra, and that the Avalokiteśvara in question may well have been the Eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara.[13]

11 *Dasheng huanxi shuangshen Dazizaitian Pinayejia wang guiyi niansong gongyang fa*, T 21, no. 1270, p. 303b28–c13; I use here the translation by James Sanford with some modifications (Sanford, 1991, p. 297).

12 In Chinese *diaohe*, meaning literary "subjugate and soften." The usual word for the subjugation is *jiangfu* or *diaofu*. The nuance is somehow different; in *diaohe*, the stress is put on the idea of "softening" and harmonizing.

13 See *Pinayejia enabodi yujia xidi pin biyao,* T 21, no. 1273, pp. 321c26–322a25. I develop this point in Iyanaga (2002b).

Anyway, in Japan, the relation between the Eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara and Vināyaka is confirmed by various texts, in particular a passage from the *Kakuzenshō* (composed *c*. 1183–*c*. 1213), which presents another interesting myth:[14]

> [The following] is related in the *Original Tradition on Kangiten* (*Kangiten honden*): In the country of Marakeira, there was a king who ate nothing but the flesh of cows and radishes. With time, cows gradually became rare throughout the land, so the people offered him the flesh of dead people. Soon, these too became rare. Then he ate the flesh of living people. At this point, the ministers and the people raised four armies to kill the king. But he became the great demon-king Vināyaka and, with a host of *vināyakas*, flew into the air and disappeared.
>
> After that, the people in the kingdom suffered epidemic diseases. The ministers and the people prayed to the Eleven-Faced Avalokiteśvara. Avalokiteśvara took on the form of a female *vināyaka* and enticed the king's evil heart. King Vināyaka was full of joy (*kangi*); [as a consequence] the epidemics ceased and the people were finally at peace.

The second part of this story is obviously taken from the myth of the incestuous marriage between Vināyaka and Avalokiteśvara, while the first part is a version of the tale of King Kalmāṣapāda (whose name means "with spotted feet"), well known in the Chinese Buddhist mythical corpus since at least the late third century.[15] The version of the *Xianyu jing* (composed in 445) is the most developed one; here is a summary:[16]

> A king went hunting in the forest and got lost. Suddenly, he encountered a female lion on heat; in fear of the lion, he was compelled to have intercourse with the animal. A few months later, the lion came to the palace of the king, carrying with her a human baby with spotted feet like a lion. This was prince Kalmāṣapāda (Ch. Bozu). When this prince grew up, the king his father died, and he became king himself. But then, by accident, he offended a sage hermit (*ṛṣi*), who made a curse according to which the king would be eating human flesh for twelve years. One day, the cook of the palace

14 *Kakuzenshō* in T. Zuzō 5, no. 3022, p. 452c17–26; the same myth is quoted in the *Byakuhō ku shō* in T. Zuzō 7, no. 3119, p. 181c3–11; here again, I use the translation by Sanford with some modifications: see Sanford (1991), pp. 297–8.

15 The *Liuduji jing,* which contains one version of it, was translated by Kang Senghui, who died in 280 (or 276): *Liuduji jing*, T 3, no. 152, pp. 22b16–23a21; and Lamotte (1949), pp. 260–2 and p. 260, n. 1 where the references of this tale are listed. On what follows, see Iyanaga (1999b), p. 55ff., pp. 66–7.

16 *Xianyu jing*, T 4, no. 202, pp. 425a18–427a5; see also Iyanaga (forthcoming).

suddenly discovered that there was no more meat in the kitchen; he went out to buy some, but on his way, he found the body of a dead child in the street. He took up this body, returned to the kitchen, cooked it and served it to the king. The latter found this meat so delicious that he asked the cook about it, and having known its origin, he ordered the cook to serve him some child meat every day. At first, the cook could find dead children, but after a while he had to kidnap living children and kill them to meet the appetite of the king. The people became very concerned and urged the ministers to seek after the criminal. When they finally discovered that their king had become a frightful cannibal, they held a meeting and decided to kill him. One day, while the king was taking a bath in the pool of his garden, the ministers attacked him with an army. The king was taken by surprise; but before being killed, he pronounced an oath, saying that he would become a flying *rākṣasa* [demon] and cause calamities to the people and the ministers. Thus, the king became a horrible king of *rākṣasa*, gathering many subordinates under his orders and causing disasters to the people.

One day, the *rākṣasa* king decided to organize a great feast in which he would sacrifice and eat with his subordinates a thousand kings. To prepare this feast, he captured 999 kings and made them prisoners. The last one, a king named Sutasoma, was a pious king. Just before being captured, he had promised a *brāhman* to make offerings to him. Imprisoned by Kalmāṣapāda, he began to cry. To Kalmāṣapāda, who was laughing at him, he replied that he would like to have a respite of a few days to fulfill the promise he had made to the *brāhman*. Kalmāṣapāda wanted to test his truthfulness and let him go. King Sutasoma returned to his kingdom and made a great offering to the *brāhman*, who taught him a Buddhist stanza on the impermanence of all beings. The king understood it and returned to Kalmāṣapāda's kingdom full of joy. Kalmāṣapāda asked him why he was so happy when he knew that he would soon be killed. King Sutasoma taught him the Buddhist stanza. Kalmāṣapāda at once repented his evil deeds, released all the prisoners and returned to his old kingdom, where he became a good king. The twelve years foretold by the sage hermit had just passed.

There are many versions of this story in Buddhist literature; one of them even mentions Mahākāla. This is the version, actually a very simplified one, that we find in the apocryphal sutra named *Renwang jing* (J. *Ninnōkyō*), "translated" (actually rewritten) by Amoghavajra. What follows is the tale as related in this sutra:[17]

17 *Renwang huguo banruo boluomiduo jing*, T 8, no. 246, pp. 840b5– c8; see the older "translation" in T 7, no. 245, pp. 830a24–b2; see also Iyanaga (forthcoming).

> Once upon a time, a prince named Kalmāṣapāda [translated here as Banzu] from the country of Tianluo was on the point of ascending the throne; the ruler of the state, a non-Buddhist (*waidaoshi*) named Sudāna (Shanshi), ordered him to take the heads of a thousand kings and offer them to Mahākāla, the god of the graveyards. The prince obeyed and captured 999 kings to cut off their heads. The last one, a king named Samantaprabhāsa (Puming wang), was a Buddhist king; made prisoner, he taught Kalmāṣapāda a stanza on the impermanence of the world. Kalmāṣapāda repented his evil deed, released all the prisoners, and became a Buddhist monk.

Thus, following the obscure thread that began with the legend of Vināyaka "subdued" by Avalokiteśvara, we encounter another "member" of the little pantheon of the Shinjōin, Mahākāla.

Furthermore, this tale is referred to in a short section on the Unction (*abhiṣeka*) of enthronement (*sokui kanjō*), in the chapter on Dakiniten in the Tendai work *Keiran shūyōshū* written by Kōjū (or Kōshū) in 1311–48. It says: "In the *Renwang-jing*, there is [a tale] about the worship of the god of graveyards; we must think of that profoundly."[18] Now, why is this story alluded to in the chapter on Dakiniten, in this section on the Unction of enthronement? We know on the one hand that Dakiniten was the principal deity (*honzon*) of the enthronement unction ceremony, which used to be performed on the occasion of the enthronement of new emperors during the latter Middle Ages and the early modern period.[19] On the other hand, we know that *ḍākinī* female demons are presented as subordinates of Mahākāla in the *Commentary to the Mahāvairocana sūtra*.[20] It is said there that *ḍākinī* are female demons living in the "jungle" (Ch. *kuangye*, J. *kōya*), eating a substance named "human yellow" (*renhuang, ninnō*) which they find in the human heart and which is the source of their extraordinary magical power. Once, the Buddha Mahāvairocana transformed himself into the form of Mahākāla, their chief, in order of subjugate them. He ate them "just as they themselves eat human hearts," and thus subjugated them.[21] It seems that the author of the *Keiran shūyōshū* interpreted the term "god of graveyards" in the tale from the *Renwang jing* – which designated Mahākāla in that text – as indicating the *ḍākinī*. It is also possible to think that the assimilation of *ḍākinī* and Mahākāla predated the choice of Dakiniten as the presiding deity of the enthronement unction ceremony, since in the tale from the *Renwang jing* Mahākāla was directly implicated in the enthronement of King Kalmāṣapāda.[22]

18 *Keiran shūyōshū*, T 76, no. 2410, p. 633c5. See also Iyanaga (1999b), p. 42 and n. 5.

19 At least from Emperor Go-Komatsu (1377–1433; r. 1382 to 1412) until Emperor Kōmei (1831–66; r. 1847 to 1866), the last emperor before the Meiji period.

20 In the Hindu mythology, the *ḍākinī* are demons under the orders of the goddess Kālī, i.e. the feminine form of (Mahā-)Kāla.

21 *Darijing shu* T 39, no. 1796, p. 687b18–c11; see Iyanaga (1999b), pp. 51–2.

22 See Iyanaga (1999b), pp. 102–3.

In any case, following the same thread that led us to Mahākāla, we have found another member of the pantheon of Shinjōin, *ḍākinī*/Dakiniten. From there to yet another member, Sarasvatī, the distance is not far. As a matter of fact, the same *Keiran shūyōshū* mentions a mysterious deity named Matarajin, who is linked both to Mahākāla and the *ḍākinī*. In a text from the second half of the twelfth century, the *Gyoki* by monk-prince Shukaku (the second son of Emperor Go-Shirakawa), this Matarajin is said to be a deity with three heads: Shōten, of golden color, at the center; Dakini, of white color, to the left; and Sarasvatī, of red color, to the right.[23] Apparently, there is no surviving image of this form of Matarajin, but there do exist representations of Dakiniten with three heads, with Dakini proper at the center, Shōten to the left, and Sarasvatī to the right. We also find Mahākāla with three heads, with Mahākāla himself at the center, Sarasvatī to the left, and Vaiśravaṇa to the right.[24]

Thus, starting with the myth of the incestuous marriage between Vināyaka and the Eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara, we can find (almost) all the members of the pantheon of Shinjōin (except for the bodhisattva Jizō): the two deities just mentioned, Sarasvatī, Dakiniten, and Mahākāla. We can summarize the links of the associations/assimilations in the following schema:

Tenjin → Eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara → Shōten (→ Kalmāṣapāda)
→ Mahākāla → Dakiniten → Sarasvatī

Second link: from Tenjin to Shōten

But we could have begun with another starting point as well. Nanri Michiko, who wrote a very interesting series of articles on the formation of the cult of Tenjin,[25] draws attention to a painted scroll entitled *Kangiten reigenki* which, according to her, was probably composed after the mid-Kamakura period (i.e. between the second half of the thirteenth century and the early fourteenth century). This work, also known as *Tenjin engi* because it contains some episodes of the life of Michizane and of the beginnings of the Tenjin cult, is actually a collection of tales of miracles that occurred due to the worship of Shōten.[26] The order of the tales seems to have been altered, and some episodes are probably lacking. The scroll is composed of two fascicles, each of them containing several episodes. The first fascicle and the first episode of the second fascicle constitute a kind of biography of the Tendai

23 See *Keiran shūyōshū*, T 76, no. 2410, pp. 632c28–633a9; *Gyoki*, T 78, no. 2493, p. 614a15–21; and Iyanaga (1999b), pp. 65–9. On Matarajin, the most extensive study is that of Yamamoto Hiroko (1998b), pp. 110–324.

24 See Iyanaga (1994), pp. 909a, 902b–905a.

25 Nanri Michiko (1996), p. 47.

26 I was unable to gain access to this document, which belongs to a private collection, and seems not to have been published yet; what I write here is based on Nanri (1996).

monk Son'i (866–940), well known for his magical powers. It is said that Son'i acquired a statue of Shōten when he was nineteen years old and continued to worship it until he was over forty years old. As examples of miraculous power of Shōten, the *Reigenki* relates the following episodes:

1 In exile at Dazaifu in Kyushu, Michizane prayed to heaven for seven days and seven nights to establish his innocence, and at last, he appeared as Tenman Daijizai Tenjin.
2 After his death (in 903), the vengeful spirit of Michizane appeared before Son'i, with whom he was in relation of master and benefactor (*shi-dan*) during his lifetime, and asked him not to prevent his revenge, but the monk refused. Michizane's spirit, full of anger, spat out a pomegranate, which turned into a ball of fire. Son'i extinguished the fire by forming with his hands the mudra of sprinkling water (*shasui no in*); this was a miracle of the power of Shōten. This episode is also mentioned in other versions of the *Tenjin engi* as that of "pomegranate Tenjin" (*zakuro tenjin*).
3 After this incident, the painted scroll describes the miracle of Son'i crossing the floodwaters of the Kamo river to go to the imperial palace. Various legends on the origins of the Tenjin cult report that the Seiryōden in the imperial palace, the hall where the emperor usually resided, was struck by lightning early in the Engi era (901–22), killing some people.[27] Son'i had been called to the palace at that moment; although the Kamo river overflowed its banks because of a heavy storm that followed the lightning, he was able to pass over the floodwaters, proceed to the palace and calm the spirit of Michizane – all this thanks again to the power of Shōten.
4 The first episode of the second fascicle of the *Reigenki* relates how Son'i pacified the revolt of Taira no Masakado (d. 940). Masakado's revolt and that of Fujiwara no Sumitomo (d. 941) were two important incidents of that period. The text says that Son'i, upon imperial orders, performed Fudō Myōō's ritual for the pacification of the state (*Fudō anchin kokka hō*); to make the ritual successful, he placed the statue of Shōten beside the principal deity (Fudō).

Nanri Michiko writes that, even though she could find almost no evidence in Son'i's biographies to the effect that he had any particular devotion to Shōten, this would not be implausible, because his master in the study of Siddhaṃ characters, Annen (*c*. 841–*c*. 897), is known to have written some works on the ritual of Shōten. As a matter of fact, the *Asabashō* (1242–79), one of the most comprehensive Tendai works on esoteric rituals, quotes

27 In fact, this incident took place much later, in 930. Emperor Daigo (885–930, r. 897–930) died soon afterwards because of the shock of this lightning. See Kasai Masaaki (1973), pp. 75–9.

several writings of Annen on this subject in its chapter on Kangiten (Shōten).[28] Another interesting piece of evidence can be found in the *Kangiten reigenki* itself: according to Nanri, there are some passages on the original vows and virtues (*honzei to kudoku*) of Kangiten, where we can read that Kangiten, by skillful means, can manifest himself as the god Nagyōtosa (this is probably the name of a Japanese kami; the pronunciation of the name of this deity is not certain), who is a "violent god" hindering the Buddhist Law (*buppō shōge no kōjin*). Now, it is known that there was a work now lost entitled *Shibu Binayaka hō* ("Rituals of Vināyaka in Four Sections"), apparently written by Annen.[29] This work is quoted in medieval Shingon ritual texts such as *Kakuzenshō*, *Byakuhōshō*, and *Byakuhō ku shō*; in one of these quotations in *Kakuzenshō*, we find exactly the same statement, with the same name of the "god Nagyōtosa."[30]

All this seems to mean that the *Kangiten reigenki* may have been written by somebody possessing some special information on Vināyaka's ritual which can be traced back to the tradition of Annen, and that Son'i, who may have belonged to that tradition, may indeed have played a role in the beginnings of the cult of Tenjin. We may even venture to suggest that the legend of the "Original transmission of Kangiten" (*Kangiten honden*) quoted in the *Kakuzenshō* (see above, p. 150) was a product of the same tradition that may have started with Annen.

Anyway, if it is true that Son'i, with his worship of Shōten, may have played some role in the formation of the cult of Tenjin, then the association of this cult with that of Shōten, that we find at the Yushima Tenjin/Shinjōin shrine-temple complex, may be considered very natural. From there, it would be easy to reconstitute the entire pantheon of Shinjōin. Thus, this time we arrive at the following schema:

Tenjin → Shōten → Eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara
→ Mahākāla → Dakiniten
→ Sarasvatī

28 Nanri mentions several works by Annen: *Annenki* ("Notes by Annen"), *Annen wajō ki* ("Notes by the Venerable Annen"), *Keirasen deiba shiki* ("Personal notes on the deva of the Mount Kailāsa"), and *Shōten ki* ("Notes on Shōten"). Nanri (1996), p. 49. According to the *Bussho kaisetsu daijiten*, vol. 3, p. 129c–d, the *Keirasan deiba shiki* is conserved and edited in the collection *Nihon daizōkyō*, Tendaishū mikkyō shōsho, vol. 3. Unfortunately, I have not been able to consult this work.

29 See Duquenne (1988), p. 327, n. 19.

30 *Kakuzenshō* T. Zuzō 5, n. 3022, p. 452a19–29; the same quotation can be found in *Byakuhō ku shō* T. Zuzō 7, n. 3119, p. 174a10–20. Nagyōtosa is an obscure deity. Bernard Faure indicated to me that its name appears in some texts related to the myths and rituals of (Sanbō-) Kōjin. Yamamoto Hiroko (1998b) wrote some interesting pages on this deity: pp. 345–7, 462–3 n. 6, 528–30, 542–6. However, it seems that all the sources she quotes are later than the texts I referred to. By the way, "Nagyōtosa" may be in some cases the combined name of two separate gods, Nagyō and Tosa.

Third link: from Tenjin to Maheśvara

Now, yet another starting point can be envisioned. It is known that from a certain moment, the spirit of Michizane began to be called Tenman Daijizai Tenjin, i.e. literally, "Celestial Deity of Great Power Filling Heaven." It is not easy to determine when this appellation began to be used. According to some documents related to the foundation of the Anrakuji at Dazaifu (where the body of Michizane was buried), a certain Umasake no Yasuyuki received an oracle in 905 (only two years after the death of Michizane) in which the new deity was already called by this name. But this date is probably too early.[31] In a prayer (*saimon*) written by Ōe no Masahira (952–1012) in 1012, the deity is called by this name[32] – and this may perhaps be one of the earliest written occurrences of this appellation. But we can assume that it was in use much earlier. For example, we find the expression *Jizai* in the text of the oracle received in 946 by a seven-year-old boy, Tarōmaru, the son of priest Miwa no Yoshitane;[33] and in another oracle that a destitute woman named Tajihi no Ayako received in 942, the shrine at Kitano in Kyōto was called Kitano Tenman Jizai Tengū (the document reporting it was apparently composed in 960).[34] Since the shrine at Kitano was founded in 947, it appears probable that the name Tenman Daijizai Tenjin was in current use at that time.

Tenjin had another interesting appellation, Daijō Itokuten ("[Minister of the] Council of State Deity of Majestic Virtue"). This was the name of the deity that the monk Dōken, alias Nichizō, encountered in his journey in the Other World, a deity "who turned out to be the spirit of Michizane."[35] Dōken was a *yamabushi* monk, who had been practicing for many years at Mount Kinpu. As Robert Borgen writes, Dōken, in 941,[36]

> had suddenly passed away after praying and fasting in a cave for twenty-one days. A meditation (*zen*) monk greeted him and escorted him to heaven, where he met Śākyamuni, who had assumed the form of Zaō Bosatsu, the god of Mount Kinpu. Dōken was also introduced to a less familiar deity, Nihon Daijō Itokuten . . . This deity turned out to be Michizane, who revealed that he had earlier been filled with anger and had planned to destroy Japan. Subsequently, however, esoteric Buddhism had calmed his wrath by one-tenth, and so he no longer intended to do great harm. Dōken told him that in Japan,

31 Kasai Masaaki (1973), p. 102; see also *Kanke godenki*, GR t. 2, p. 171a16–17.

32 Kasai (1973), p. 106.

33 GR t. 2, *Tenmangū takusenki*, p. 158b14.

34 Kasai (1973), p. 94.

35 Borgen (1994), pp. 315–18.

36 Ibid. (the translation has been slightly modified). See also the text quoted in Kasai (1973), pp. 87–91.

> everyone, high and low, knew him as "Fire and Thunder" (Karai) Tenjin and revered him as they did the Buddha. Michizane, however, protested that Fire and Thunder Tenjin was only his third messenger. He further noted that unless he became a Buddha, he still intended to punish those who had wronged him, although he would answer the prayers of those who worshipped him. After his meeting with Michizane, Dōken learned that it was this third messenger who had caused lightning to strike the palace.

The strange journey of Dōken (who changed his religious name to Nichizō following Zaō Bosatsu's advice) continued, during which he met the spirit of the former Emperor Daigo in hell, where he "was being tortured for his sins, one of which was driving Michizane into exile . . . Thirteen days after he had passed away, Dōken miraculously returned to life, and reported this strange experience to the court."[37] This document, usually called *Dōken shōnin meido ki*, had a great influence in the formation of the Tenjin cult. It was also the first document in which the spirit of Michizane was clearly associated with the lightning that had struck the imperial palace in 930. Before the deification of Michizane, it was generally believed that the main damage that angry ghosts (*goryō*) could inflict on human beings was epidemic diseases; in this regard, the cult of Tenjin was an innovation, since the new deity was assimilated closely to old thunder deities (*raijin, karaijin*).[38] This is probably the reason why the shrine for the new deity was located in Kitano, since it was the place of an old cult dedicated to the god of thunder.[39] And this is probably also the reason why the new deity was associated with the ox, because there used to be sacrifices of oxen in the rain-making rituals offered to the god of thunder.[40]

We can now finally return to the issue of Tenjin's names, Tenman Daijizai Tenjin and Daijō Itokuten. The element "Tenman" of the first name certainly alludes to the "thunder nature" of the new deity, which "fills the heaven." The element "Daijō" in the second name alludes to the title of "Great Minister" (*daijō daijin*) that was given to the deity in the final posthumous promotion in 993[41] – the title that, according to many people, should have

37 Borgen (1994), p. 318.

38 See Nanri (1996), pp. 14–15. See also Irene H. Lin's chapter in this book.

39 See Kasai (1973), pp. 94–5.

40 For example, the *Kenkyū-bon* version of the *Kitano tenjin engi* relates that after the death of Michizane, when people were taking his remains to the burial ground, "the fat and strong ox of Tsukushi" pulling the cart stopped at one point of the road and could not be driven farther, so that they placed the tomb there, in the place where Anrakuji was subsequently built: see Takeuchi Hideo (1968), pp. 2–3; Borgen (1994), p. 304. On old thunder cults at Kitano, see Kasai (1973), pp. 103–4.

41 See Borgen (1994), p. 324.

been given to Michizane already during his human lifetime, as indicated in propaganda texts such as the *Dōken shōnin meido ki*. Now, the remaining elements of the two names, "Daijizai [Tenjin]" and "[Dai-]itoku[ten]" obviously suggest the names of two Buddhist – or, more specifically, of two esoteric – deities, namely, Daijizaiten, i.e. the Hindu god Maheśvara/Śiva, and Daiitoku Myōō, i.e. the *vidyārāja* Yamāntaka, who have the common characteristic of mounting an ox (because, after all, Yamāntaka is nothing else but one of the various Buddhist disguises of Śiva).[42] The association of these esoteric deities with the vengeful spirit of Michizane is not surprising, since they were both considered as deities of a wrathful nature. Maheśvara, especially, was known as the deity who challenged the supremacy of the Buddhist Law, and was subjugated by Vajrasattva or Trailokyavijaya who emanated from the Buddha Mahāvairocana (see below on this point); and curiously enough, Rudra, an ancient name of Śiva/Maheśvara, was considered as a storm god already in Vedic times.

Now that we have reached this point in our discussion, it is easy to return to our initial problem, that of the association of Tenjin with the Buddhist pantheon of Shinjōin. The main members of this pantheon all belong to the Śaiva mythology, that is Gaṇeśa (=Vināyaka), a son of Śiva, Mahākāla, a "dark" form of Śiva, and *ḍākinī*, demons under the orders of Kālī. As to the Eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara, the problem is more complicated, but it is possible to conceive this bodhisattva as a "disguised Buddhist form" of the group of Eleven Rudra.[43] On the other hand, we can say that in the myth of incestuous marriage between Vināyaka and this form of Avalokiteśvara, the latter is in a sense playing the role of Pārvatī, the mother of Gaṇeśa in Hindu mythology.[44] Now, if Tenjin himself is assimilated to Maheśvara because of his assimilation to the god of thunder, then, it is easy and natural to explain (almost) the whole pantheon of Shinjōin (the link to Sarasvatī can be made from Gaṇeśa, *ḍākinī*/Dakiniten and Mahākāla; the problem of association with Kṣitigarbha being excepted here). So, we now have the following schema of links between these different deities:

Tenjin (⟷ god of thunder ⟷ ox ⟷ Maheśvara →)
Gaṇeśa → Eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara
Mahākāla → Dakiniten
→ Sarasvatī

42 On all these associations, see also Iyanaga (1983a), pp. 761b–763b; Iyanaga (1999a), pp. 23a–4b.

43 I develop this point in Iyanaga (2002b).

44 Gaṇeśa is said to have been created only by Pārvatī, without any participation of Śiva; and some myths relate that Gaṇeśa had actually incestuous intercourse with his mother: see Doniger O'Flaherty (1973), p. 150.

Provisional conclusions

What can we learn from these three attempts at explaining the connections between the deities of the shrine–temple complex of Yushima Tenjin and Shinjōin? One obvious conclusion is that it seems to be possible to begin with any starting point: no matter where one decides to start – either with the relation between Tenjin and the Eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara, or that between Tenjin and Shōten, or that between Tenjin and Maheśvara (through the relation between Tenjin and the thunder god) – one always arrives at the same results. "La terre de la mythologie est ronde," as Lévi-Strauss so rightly puts it.[45] Another conclusion is that the connections are not as arbitrary as they may seem at first glance. Behind each association, we can always find some myths, some old and odd rituals, some iconographical details, probably often forgotten by the interested party itself, but suggesting through obscure images the direction in which the mythical amalgam is growing. And, evidently, the meaning of these mythical amalgams or "fluids" is also determined by the symbolical values of the associations.

Another aspect that can be noted is the importance of Śaiva mythical elements in this ensemble. Although Śiva-Maheśvara himself is never mentioned by name, he seems to be there, behind the scene, coloring all the figures with some variegated "Śaiva colors." This also means that our search should not be limited to the Japanese, or even to the Buddhist mythical corpus; even though the interested party certainly ignored the original Hindu myths, it is possible that something of them – through some obscure route, probably some fragments of myths transmitted by Buddhism – may have played a role in the formation of different associations between deities.

Finally, it is interesting to note the mysterious role that seems to have been played by some writings of Annen. This is not so clear in the case we just discussed – but in the following section of this chapter, we will attempt to shed more light on his influence on *honji suijaku* mythical thought.

A few lines from the *Bikisho*

Now, let us turn to a different issue, namely the presence and role of Hindu deities in *honji suijaku* thought in medieval Japan. The basis for our discussion is the passage from the *Bikisho* which is referred to in the introductory chapter of this volume.[46] The *Bikisho* is a very impressive document, representing, as Mark Teeuwen and Fabio Rambelli write, "a fully developed set of *honji suijaku* combinations." The text is written in an extremely obscure style, very typical of its genre. The argument is not a linear development of logical elements, but is rather composed of an accumulation or juxtaposition

45 "The earth of mythology is round": Lévi-Strauss (1966), p. 8.

46 See above, p. 48.

of images linked to each other by some loose association of ideas, which can be very enigmatic if the reader is not familiar with the mythical, religious, and ideological world of the author(s).

The context of the passage in question has already been analyzed in the introductory chapter: the text intends to explain the nature of the kami of Ise, Amaterasu. The explanation is divided into two main parts: an "intra-doctrinal" (*kyōnai*) part and an "extra-doctrinal" (*kyōge*) part. The "intra-doctrinal" part is divided into two "senses" (*gi*): as to the first "sense," the text simply writes that "it is made clear by [texts] such as the *Chronicle of Japan* (*Nihongi tō*)."[47] This "probably refers to traditional myths and kami lineages."[48] Now, the second "sense" is much more developed: it is "made clear by the two teachings of Śākyamuni and Mahāvairocana." We should perhaps understand this as meaning the exoteric and esoteric teachings of Buddhism. And this second "sense" is composed of five different "senses." As the introductory chapter explains:

> In a Buddhist context, the divinity Amaterasu refers to the following [five "senses"]: (i) Mahāvairocana of the two realms (ryōbu Dainichi); (ii) Fudō Myōō and Aizen Myōō; (iii) Mahābrahmā (Daibonten); (iv) King Enma; and (v) Kōbō Daishi. This series of associations is hierarchically structured, from the cosmic Buddha of esoteric Buddhism in its two fundamental modalities, to two of its more powerful emanations (Fudō and Aizen), to the deva king of the Realm of Forms, Brahmā, to the embodiment of negativity, King Enma, the ruler of hell and suffering, and finally to a human manifestation, Kōbō Daishi.[49]

Let us now focus on the association of Amaterasu (and the Ise Shrine in its entirety) with the deva Mahābrahmā. The *Bikisho* says:[50]

> In the third place, we learn that [Amaterasu is associated with] Mahābrahmā. This means [the following]: [it is said in texts] such as the *Chronicle of Japan* that [at the beginning of the world, when] the Heavenly-upside-down-Halberd (*ama no sakahoko*) had been put down, King Māra descended, claiming possession over Japan, and said:[51] "At the top of the Realm of Desire, [I am?] King Māra of the Sixth Heaven (*Dairokuten no Maō*)." At the top of the Realm of Form, this person (*kono hito*) is [called] King Brahmā (Bonnō).

47 *Bikisho*, ST vol. Shingon Shintō ge, p. 505, l. 5.

48 See above, p. 48.

49 Ibid. pp. 48–9; *Bikisho*, ST vol. Shingon Shintō ge, p. 505, ll. 5–8.

50 *Bikisho*, ST vol. Shingon Shintō ge, p. 507, ll. 3–7.

51 The text has a note here, saying that the following myth on King Māra is not to be found in the *Chronicle of Japan*.

> This person, in order to convert and save us [and] instruct [us in] the teachings of Buddha, descended from heaven, and, being alone [in this world], thought of a (?) friend (*tomo omoi*). In response to his thought, a son-of-deva (*tenshi*, Sk. *devaputra*) descended [in his turn]. This [person] is called Harama.[52] [Among] these three persons, King Brahmā created the *brāhmī* script of Southern India (*Nanten bonji*), the deva Viṣṇu (Bichūten) created the Western barbarian script (*Ko monji*) used in the Western Barbarian Country (*Kokoku*), and Harama created the Chinese script of China, looking at the traces left by birds on the seashore. It is also said that these three persons are [the same as] the three brothers in the *Rishukyō*. There are different opinions [according to different] sutras, [but we] harmonize them [and] do not take [one of them against the others], etc. [It is thus that we should] know [this teaching].

What does all this mean? Even with the many additions that I put in square brackets, and which represent only my interpretation, these sentences look like a jumble of obscure images and ideas. Fortunately, in this case, it is possible to trace back virtually all the elements composing this passage. Let us try to isolate these elements.

1 The image of the Heavenly-upside-down-Halberd evokes immediately the myth of creation of Japan (or of the cosmos). We have to note the phallic symbolism of this image (which is often linked to both the *vajra* and the main pillar of shrines, *shinbashira*), and also its possible association with the "reed shoot" (*ashikabi*) which is said to have been the "original stuff" out of which everything emerged from the primordial waters according to classical Japanese mythology. The expression "King Māra of the Sixth Heaven" refers to the myth of King Māra that can be found in numerous texts of Japanese medieval literature, and can be summarized as follows. When the creator god (Izanagi or Amaterasu) is about to create Japan, King Māra of the Sixth Heaven comes to prevent him (or her) from doing so, because he foresees that if the country is created, Buddhism will be prosperous there, and Māra will lose his power. Izanagi (or Amaterasu) is compelled to make a promise that he (or she) will not tolerate Buddhism in his (her) proximity. Under this condition, he (or she) is permitted to create Japan, and because of this promise, Buddhism is tabooed at Ise Shrine.[53] The last sentence in the *Bikisho* just before the passage quoted above refers to this taboo against Buddhism at the Ise Shrine ("[The Great Deity of Ise] abhors Buddhist

52 "Harama" is written with the characters "*ha*" meaning "wave," "*ra*" meaning "net" and "*ma*" meaning "to rub." Just below, the same name is written in *katakana.*

53 See Iyanaga (1996–7); and its Japanese version, with modifications and additions: Iyanaga (1998a), (1998b) and (1999a).

monks"); it is possible that this was the "key image" which led the author(s) to the image of King Māra of the Sixth Heaven.

2 After the allusion to the myth of King Māra of the Sixth Heaven, a new divine figure is introduced, King Brahmā, who is said to be "the same person" as King Māra but resides at the top of the Realm of Form. This King Brahmā descended from heaven to teach the Buddhist Law to human beings in order to save them. He longs for "a friend," and thus a third deva, named Harama (which is another transliteration for "Brahmā") descends from heaven.[55]

3 All together, these three "persons" create the writing systems of India, of the "Western Barbarian Country," and China. Finally, these three deities are identified as the "three brothers" of the *Rishukyō* (Ch. *Liqu jing*).

King Māra, Maheśvara, and Brahmā

Now, let us try to explain each of these elements.

First, as I have tried to show in my articles on the myth of King Māra of the Sixth Heaven,[55] this myth is in part based on some doctrines of Annen, developed especially in the introductory chapter of his work on Siddhaṃ, the *Shittanzō*, and his main doctrinal works, the *Shingonshū kyōji gi* and the *Taizō Kongō bodaishin gi ryaku mondō*.[56] The issue here is the creation of writing characters or scripts in different cultures, in the *Shittanzō*, and the place(s) where the teaching(s) of the Buddha were given, in the other writings. In this context, Annen presents some of his cosmological speculations. Here I cannot go into the details of Annen's grandiose cosmico-metaphysical system, but the essential idea is that there exist different cosmic planes ("heavens") in which devas reside; on each such heavenly realm there is a "king" or "lord" who must be subjugated by a Buddhist deity. His final conclusion is that "the Realm of Māra is Thusness, the Realm of Buddha is Thusness" (Ch. *mojie ru, fojie ru*, J. *makai nyo, bukkai nyo*).[57] This sentence from a classical Mahāyāna scripture, the *Śūraṃgama samādhi sūtra*, was a recurrent theme in the doctrines of the Tendai school and later became a typical doctrine of Original Enlightenment thought (*hongaku shisō*).[58] In particular, Annen writes in his *Shittanzō*:[59]

54 It is possible to read this name as "Barama" as well; the *katakana* notation in documents of this kind has generally no marks for voiced sounds.

55 Iyanaga (1996–7), (1998a), (1998b), and (1999a).

56 Annen, *Shittanzō*, in T 84, no. 2702 i; *Shingonshū kyōji gi*, in T 75, no. 2396 iv; *Taizō Kongō bodaishin gi ryaku mondō*, in T 75, no. 2397 v.

57 *Shingonshū kyōji gi*, T 75, no. 2396, p. 434b21–25.

58 T 15, no. 642, p. 639c14–19; see Lamotte (1965), p. 217; see also *Mohe zhiguan* of Zhiyi, in T 46, no. 1911, pp. 50a4–6, 115a1–2, 116b11–2; *Shinnyokan* in NST 9, p. 145; and Iyanaga (1999a), pp. 27b–28a.

59 *Shittanzō*, T 84, no. 2702, p. 372a10–16.

> There are three kinds of Maheśvara. The first is the lord of the Fourth Meditation Heaven (*shizenten shu*), named [Maheśvara-]Piśāca (J. Bishaja): this is the one who, having had the great arrogance of [claiming his] supremacy over the Trichiliocosmos, has been subjugated by the *vidyārāja* Acala (Fudō Myōō), when the Buddha first attained enlightenment [as is told in] the *Kongōchōgyō*.[60] The second is the lord of the First Meditation Heaven, named Śaṃkara (J. Shōkara): he is the one named Śaṃkara in the [*Commentary of the*] *Mahāvairocana sūtra*, and about whom it is said that he has great power (*daijizai*) only over one [megachilio]cosmos, not over the entire Trichiliocosmos.[61] The third is the lord of the Sixth Heaven [of the Realm of Desire] named Īśāna (J. Ishana): he is the one about whom it is said in the [*Kongō*] *Jumyōkyō* (Ch. *Jingang shouming jing*) that when the Buddha descended to Mount Sumeru, he ordered Trailokyavijaya (J. Gōzanze Myōō) to subjugate him, this King of *deva* hard and obstinate and difficult to convert (*gōgō nange,* Ch. *gangjang nanhua*), together with his heavenly spouse.[62]

This text itself contains many explicit and implicit references to other texts and doctrines and is not easy to explain. At least two remarks should be made. First, the Maheśvara-Piśāca of the Fourth Meditation Heaven, whom Annen mentions as the first of the "three Maheśvara," is the result of an error of quotation. Here is the passage of the *Mahāyāna avatāra śāstra* that was originally referred to:[63]

> Question: Is this Maheśvara [bodhisattva of the Tenth Ground] you mention, the same as the Maheśvara [known] in the ordinary world (*shijian* Moxishouluo), or is there a difference between the two?
>
> Answer: The one [I refer to] is Īśvara of the Pure Abodes (*jingju zizai,* i.e. the ruler of Śuddhāvāsika Heaven, that is, the Fourth Meditation Heaven), and not the Īśvara of the profane world (*shijian*

60 On the myth of subjugation of Maheśvara in the *Kongōchōgyō* (Ch. *Jingangding jing*), see Iyanaga (1985). According to the version of the myth related in the *Commentary of Mahāvairocana sūtra* by Yixing, it is indeed the *vidyārāja* Acala who plays the role of subduer. On the other hand, in the perspective of the doctrine of the cycle of the *Kongōchōgyō*, the original enlightenment of the Buddha Vairocana took place in the highest place of the Fourth Meditation Heaven, Akaniṣṭha.

61 This is a rather exact quotation from the *Commentary on the Mahāvairocana sūtra*, T 39, no. 1796, p. 634c6–8. In classical Buddhist cosmology, the "lord of the First Meditation Heaven" is Mahābrahmā.

62 There are three versions of the *Jingang shouming duoluni jing*: T 20, no. 1133, 1134A and 1134B. For the passage referred to here, see Iyanaga (1985), pp. 664–7. The sutra describes the descent of the Buddha to Mount Sumeru and the subjugation of Maheśvara by Trailokyavijaya, but it does not mention the spouse of Maheśvara, Umā.

63 T 32, no. 1634, p. 46b1–9.

> *zizai*). The Maheśvara you mention has the same name, but it is not the same being. [On the one hand,] there is Maheśvara of the Pure Abodes; [on the other hand,] there is Piśāca-Maheśvara (Ch. Pisheshe Moxishouluo, J. Bishaja-Makeishura). The one of the Pure Abodes lives so close to the Realm of the Buddha that he can be separated from it only by an obstacle [as thin] as a silk fabric (Ch. *luohuzhang*, J. *rakokushō*).

The word *piśāca* (Ch. *pisheshe*, J. *bishaja*) refers to a kind of demon who wanders around battle fields and burial grounds devouring dead bodies (just like the *ḍākinī*). The text quoted here intends to explain a problem which may have arisen among Indian Buddhists: some of the classical Mahāyāna texts, such as the *Daśabhūmika sūtra*, identified Maheśvara with a bodhisattva of the Tenth Ground residing at the top of the Realm of Form in a place named Śuddhāvāsa or more precisely Akaniṣṭha, but Maheśvara/Śiva, for many Indians familiar with Hindu mythology, rather evoked the image of a violent god, more demonic than serene. This is the reason why this text tries to distinguish between "two kinds of Maheśvara," the Buddhist one, and the Hindu one. However, Annen interpreted this text in a completely opposite way, perhaps because of an error of memory. Here is how he quoted the above passage in his *Shingonshū kyōji gi*:[64]

> In the school of the True Word (*shingonshū*),[65] we say that the angry manifestation (*funnushin*) of Īśāna is Rudra; he is also called Maheśvara. This is King Māra of the Palace of the Sixth Heaven (Dairokutengū Maō). The *Mahāyāna avatāra śāstra* says: "There are two kinds of Maheśvara: one is Īśāna-Maheśvara (Ishana-Makeishura), and the other is Piśāca-Maheśvara (Bishasha-Makeishura)." The former is Māra of the Sixth Heaven, whereas the latter is the god-king of the Fourth Meditation Heaven.

Why is Īśāna – another name of Maheśvara/Śiva, used especially when this god is envisioned as the protector of the north-eastern direction in the group of the Twelve Protectors of Directions, *jūniten* – or Rudra here identified with King Māra of the Sixth Heaven? This is the subject of the second remark that we have to make. From a certain period on, Māra was considered in both Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna traditions as the king of the highest heaven, the Sixth, of the Realm of Desire. The devas of this heaven are named Paranirmita-vaśavartin, i.e. those who "have the power of partaking of the pleasures created by other [inferior devas]" (Ch. Tahua zizai tian, J. Take

64 *Shingonshū kyōji gi*, T 75, no. 2396, p. 435b4–7; see also by Annen, *Shittanzō*, T 84, no. 2702, p. 371a5–7, also quoting the passage from the *Mahāyāna avatāra śāstra.*

65 Annen refers to the esoteric Tendai tradition as the "school of the True Word."

jizaiten), and their ruler is named Vaśavartin, the "Mighty One." But in Chinese, both names Īśvara (which is another name of Maheśvara/Śiva) and Vaśavartin are traditionally translated by the same expression Zizai tian (J. Jizaiten). Thus, Īśāna-Maheśvara being identified with Jizaiten (Vaśavartin), which is another appellation of Māra, we can understand why Annen placed this deity in the Sixth Heaven of the Realm of Desire.

We should also note the "tri-partition" of this mythical/cosmological system, i.e. the fact that Maheśvara is divided into three "forms": (i) Īśāna/Rudra–Māra at the top of the Realm of Desire, (ii) Śaṃkara-Mahābrahmā at the top of the First Meditation Heaven, and (iii) Maheśvara (*piśāca*) at the top of the Fourth Meditation Heaven. This tri-partition may correspond to other groups composed of three elements, especially the Hindu *trimūrti* deities: Śiva/Brahmā/Viṣṇu.

After these two complicated explanations, we can now understand the passage of the *Shittanzō* I quoted above.[66] All the important deities of the various heavenly levels are said to be some transformation of Maheśvara. Maheśvara, in turn, is normally identified with a bodhisattva of the Tenth Ground, but here he is also considered as the god of supreme arrogance (who may even be a demonic deity, *piśāca*). Furthermore, all these deities are subjugated by a Buddhist deity. For all these reasons, all these deities may be a form of Māra or a form of Brahmā – and at the same time, in the ultimate reality, all of them are some emanations or aspects of Buddhahood itself. They may be "good" (as the Mahābrahmā of the *Bikisho*, who is said to have "descended to teach the Buddhist Law" to human beings), or "evil" (as King Māra, who wanted to prevent the creation of Japan), all at the same time. In accord with the fundamental tenets of original enlightenment thought, these deities, regardless of their moral qualities, are at the same time metaphysical, cosmic, and magical *powers*. Moreover, this system of combinatory identifications "neutralizes" and "dissolves" the individuality of each deity, so that each of them can play the role of any other.

The importance of these doctrinal developments by Annen cannot be overestimated. They form the fundamental background and the framework for all the mythical elements isolated in the passage of the *Bikisho* with which we started this section – and they could also be, as I will suggest in my conclusions, one of the fundamental backgrounds and frameworks for all medieval Buddhist-Shinto speculations in general.

Brahmā, the creator god of **honji suijaku** *mythology*

Let us move to the second element of the associations in the *Bikisho*, i.e. Mahābrahmā and his "friend," named here Harama. This part of the passage

66 For further clarifications, refer to the chart on Annen's cosmological system in Iyanaga (1998a), p. 50; and the chart, more complete, in Iyanaga (1983a), pp. 742–4.

seems to refer to the medieval Buddho-shintoist myth of the existence of two Brahmās. To understand the genesis of this myth, it is best to turn to the cosmogonic myth narrated at the beginning of the *Yamato Katsuragi hōzanki*, which certainly had an immense influence on later Buddhist-Shinto mythology. This text, written probably after the famous *Nakatomi no harae kunge*, perhaps around the early thirteenth century, is one of the oldest ones of this genre. The *Yamato Katsuragi hōzanki* begins in the following way:[67]

> Thus we heard: [at the beginning,] Heaven and Earth had a will to become (*jōi*); the spirit of Water transformed itself into Heaven and Earth, and the Winds of the Ten Directions crossed each other, and touching each other, sustained the great Water. A deity (*kami*) with a thousand heads and two thousand hands and feet was formed (*keshō*) on the Water. He was named God-King of Permanent Existence and Compassion (*Jōjū jihi shinnō*), and became Jikō. A golden Lotus of the Marvelous Law with a thousand petals came out from his navel. Its light was very bright, as though a thousand moons were shining together. In this flower, there was a man-god (*ninjin*) who was sitting cross-legged in the lotus position. This man-god also put forth an infinite light. He was named God King Brahmā (Bontennō). From the heart of God King Brahmā, eight sons-of-*deva* were born. These eight sons-of-*deva* gave birth to Heaven and Earth and the people. They are called “Heavenly deities” (*tenjin*); they are also considered to be the ancestor deities of the Heavenly Emperor (*tentei no sojin*).

This is indeed a truly surprising text, because this myth is a quotation of a famous Hindu creation myth found in the Buddhist Canon. More precisely, the whole passage from “the Winds of the Ten Directions” until “these eight sons-of-*deva* gave birth to Heaven and Earth and the people” is an almost exact quotation from the *Dazhidu lun*.[68] The only differences are: (i) the statement: “A deity . . . was formed,” which is added; (ii) the name of the god, God King of Permanent Existence and Compassion, is added; and (iii) the other name of that god, rendered as Jikō 事綱 (*kun yomi koto* and *tsuna*, Ch. *shi* and *gang*) in the manuscript used for the edition of *Chūsei shintōron*, which is actually Ichū 韋紐 (Ch. Weiniu, written with the characters *i* meaning “tanned hide” and *chū* meaning “string”), i.e. the

67 *Yamato Katsuragi hōzanki* in NST 19, pp. 58 and 273b. On all that follows, see Iyanaga (1998b), pp. 28b–36b.

68 *Dazhidu lun*, in T 25, no. 1509, p. 116a6–11. The same myth can be found in other texts of the Buddhist Canon, such as *Zapiyu jing*, in T 4, no. 207, p. 529b9–19 (tale no. 31); *Waidao xiaocheng niepan lun*, in T 32, no. 1640, p. 157a11–19; *Zhongguan lun shu* by Jizang (J. Kichizō), in T 42, no. 1824, p. 14c4–16; and *Fenbie gongde lun*, in T 25, no. 1507, p. 31a8–12.

transliteration of Viṣṇu in the *Dazhidu lun*. But in other manuscripts, the first character is sometimes written 葦 *i* (*kun yomi ashi*, Ch. *wei*, meaning "reed") and the second character 鋼 *kō* (*kun yomi ami*, Ch. *wang*, meaning "net"). The second character is probably a copy error for 紐 *chū*, but the first character, meaning "reed," which could allude to the "reed shoot" (*ashikabi*) of classical mythology, may well have been chosen for its resemblance of shape with the original 韋 *i* meaning "tanned hide."[69] This new creator god, God King of Permanent Existence and Compassion, identified with Viṣṇu (and/or the "reed shoot"), appears in several other passages of the *Yamato Katsuragi hōzanki*. Here is another example:[70]

> An [oral] transmission says:
>
> At the beginning of the *kalpa*, there was a god, named God King of Permanent Existence and Compassion (in Buddhist terminology [*hōgo*], he is called King of Gods Mahābrahmā Śikhin [Shiki Daibontennō], and in the language of the kami [*shingo*], he is called Ame no Minakanushi no Mikoto), who resided in the Palace of Mahābrahmā's Heaven. He had an immense compassion and sincerity for the sentient beings, and thus he created ten billions of suns and moons, and ten billions of Brahmā devas, and saved infinite categories of beings. This is why he is the original source of all the devas and the original lord ruling over the Trichilio-megachiliocosm.

Here, the God King of Permanent Existence and Compassion, who could have been identified with Viṣṇu in the previously quoted passage, is identified instead with Mahābrahmā Śikhin, and also with the most abstract and the most primordial god of classical Japanese mythology, Ame no Minakanushi. The statement that he is the "original lord ruling over the Trichilio-megachiliocosm" appears to be a quotation from a sentence in the *Dazhidu lun*,[71] but the transliteration of the name Śikhin is probably taken from the first chapter of the *Lotus Sutra*. Among the many beings who attended the assembly of the Buddha's teaching of that sutra, we find, for instance, "Īśvara and Maheśvara with their retinue of thirty thousand devas; the King of devas Brahmā, the lord of the Sahā world; Mahābrahmā Śikhin and Mahābrahmā of Brilliant Light (Sk. Jyotiṣprabha), with their retinue of twelve thousand devas."[72]

Now that we have seen how the individuality of different deities can be "dissolved" in the cosmological system that dates back to Annen, it should

69 See Itō Satoshi (1999a), pp. 50b–51a and n. 3; Iyanaga (1998b), pp. 30–1, Iyanaga (1999a) p. 33a.

70 *Yamato Katsuragi hōzanki* in NST 19, pp. 60–1 and 274b.

71 T 25, no. 1509, p. 58a26.

72 T 9, no. 262, p. 2a17–20.

be easy to understand why the same god may at the same time be Viṣṇu and Mahābrahmā. As a matter of fact, another passage of the same *Yamato Katsuragi hōzanki* identifies the god called "Permanent Existence" with Maheśvara,[73] while in other passages, the deva Īśvara, or Maheśvara "the lord of the Palace of the Sixth Heaven," is identified with the Japanese primordial couple Izanagi and Izanami.[74]

In these passages of the *Yamato Katsuragi hōzanki*, Brahmā still remains only one god – even though we can notice a tendency to duplicate and "sexualize" the primordial god (as in the case of Maheśvara of the Sixth Heaven identified with Izanagi and Izanami). The next step will be taken in the *Senkūin himon* (composed probably between 1240 and 1275, at Senkūin, a Buddhist temple affiliated to the Ise Shrine),[75] where it is said:[76]

> In the Eight Great Provinces (*dai-hasshū* or *ōyashima*, i.e. in the country of Japan), in the land of Ise of the divine winds (*jinpū* or *kamikaze*), the Two Great Imperial Deities (*kōtaijin*) reside at [the Shrine of] Amaterasu. They are the primordial gods (*genjin*) of the creation of Heaven and Earth. [Thus,] this is the Seat of the Lord(s) of one Great Trichilio-cosm.
>
> [The Two Deities are:]
>
> Emperor Mahābrahmā Śikhin (Shiki Daibontennō) (that is to say, here [in Japanese], Ame no Minakanushi no Mikoto. He is also called the Great Imperial Deity Toyouke (Toyouke kōtai jingū) residing at [the Shrine of] Amaterasu in the land of Ise).
>
> Emperor [or Empress?] Mahābrahmā of Brilliant Light (Kōmyō Daibontennō) (that is to say, here, Ōhirume no Muchi [another name for Amaterasu]. He [she] is also called the Great Imperial Deity residing at [the Shrine of] Amaterasu in the land of Ise).

In this passage, Mahābrahmā is divided into two deities, one male and one female. The male deity is called Śikhin and corresponds to Ame no Minakanushi, who is Toyouke, the deity of the Outer Shrine (Gekū) of Ise. The female deity is called Brilliant Light, who is Amaterasu of Ise's Inner Shrine (Naikū). The name Kōmyō Daibontennō is taken from the list of deities of the first chapter of the *Lotus Sutra* quoted above. In summary, we have this schema:

> Mahābrahmā Śikhin = Ame no Minakanushi = Toyouke = Outer Shrine (male)
>
> Mahābrahmā of Brilliant Light = Amaterasu = Inner Shrine (female)

73 *Yamato Katsuragi hōzanki* in NST 19, pp. 60, 274b.

74 Ibid., pp. 62, 275a; pp. 59, 274a.

75 See Suzuki Yoshikazu (1985), pp. 194–8.

76 Ibid., p. 203.

In the *Tenchi reikiki*, this speculation is taken one step further; the two deities are said to have intercourse (*majiwari, mito no maguai*) and to correspond to the Two Realms of the Two Mandala. The schema here is as follows:[77]

Mahābrahmā Śikhin = Vajradhātu mandala = Ame no Minakanushi = Toyouke = Outer Shrine
Mahābrahmā of Brilliant Light = Garbhadhātu mandala = Amaterasu = Inner Shrine

On the basis of these elements from the *Yamato Katsuragi hōzanki,* the *Senkūin himon* and *Reikiki*, we can understand why two Brahmās are mentioned in the passage of the *Bikisho* with which we began this section, and why the first Brahmā, after having "descended" to the earth, longed for a "friend." In the context of Ise Shinto theology, we could say that the first Brahmā corresponds to Toyouke, while the second Brahmā, who descended afterwards, corresponds to Amaterasu.

The "three brothers," creators of different writing systems

At this point, we finally arrive at the third and last element in the passage of the *Bikisho* I quoted at the beginning of this section, the one that refers to the creation of writing systems in different countries. On this point, we can fortunately be brief, because the images appear to be simple, and probably indirect, references to some passages from the introductory chapter of the *Shittanzō*, where Annen discusses in detail the creation of different writing systems.[78]

First, we find what is probably the original source of the strange transliteration of the name Brahmā as Harama:[79]

> In the *Commentary on the Treatise on the Lotus Sutra* (*Hokkeron chū*), Jōtō writes:
>
> At the beginning of the kalpa, Maheśvara had intercourse with Viṣṇī (Bishunichi?)[80] and gave birth to a child called Brahmā (Baranma).[81]

77 *Tenchi reikiki* in NST 19, p. 72 (and 278b–79a); *Kōbō Daishi zenshū*, vol. 5, pp. 73–4. See Iyanaga (1998b), pp. 32a–3b.

78 On all that follows, see Iyanaga (1983b).

79 *Shittanzō* T 84, no. 2702, p. 371a14–18. Interestingly, the passage just before the one quoted here deals with the creation myth by Mahābrahmā and the eight sons-of-*deva* – the myth that also appears at the beginning of the *Yamato Katsuragi hōzanki*, which I translated above. This passage is a summary of the Tiantai work *Zhiguan fuxingchuan hongjue*, T 46, no. 1912, p. 434a24–b11.

80 The pronunciation of the second character (composed of the radical "rice" and the character *fuku* meaning "again"), which is unknown in any of the dictionaries that I could have access to, is not sure at all, and consequently the restitution "Viṣṇī" is not sure either.

81 "Baranma" is written with the characters *ba* meaning "old woman," *ran* meaning "indigo" (*kun yomi ai*) and *ma* meaning "to rub." This transliteration is very rare; I personally have

> He had four faces and taught the four Vedas (shi Hada); he also had another face on the top [of his head], which taught another Veda. The four Vedas taught by the first four faces constitute the Dharma of the World (*sehō*, Sk. *lokadharma*?). The one taught by the face on the top is profound and difficult to understand. Only the first four Vedas are circulating in our world.

Jōtō (741–815/6) was a monk of the Hossō school. His work, the *Hokkeron chū*, is now lost, but fortunately we can find a text that he has certainly copied, the *Fahua lun shuji* by two Korean monks from Silla, Ŭijok (J. Gijaku, 684–704) and Ŭiil (Giichi).[82] The source of this curious myth on the origin of the Vedas is unknown to me, but I think it is not entirely groundless, because it evokes the well-known Hindu myth according to which the four Vedas had been preached by the four faces of Brahmā.

Now, where can we find the source of the myth on the creation of the three writing systems by the three brother deities? I am unable to point out a single source, but by "cutting and pasting" different passages from the introductory chapter of the *Shittanzō*, it is quite possible to gather the elements of this myth. First, a myth of the "three Brahmā brothers" having created different scripts can be found in a quotation from the *Wuyi wude dacheng silun xuanyi* (J. *Mue mutoku daijō shiron gengi*), a (partly) lost work of Huijun (J. Ekin):[83]

> Seeking [the origin of] the Fourteen Sounds [i.e. the fourteen vowels of Sanskrit], [we find that] they were originally part of the Dharma of the buddhas of the past. They were used both for conversion to the path [of salvation] and in the profane world, even though the true intention of the buddhas was to employ them for [salvation] beyond the profane world, not for vain secular disputations [between different] schools. After the buddhas [of the past] disappeared, the Brahmā devas met [and decided that] it was necessary to send three brothers down to the Realm of Desire, [to teach human beings] the scripts of Brahmā, of Kha[roṣṭhī], and the *zhuan* (*fan jia zhuan shu*),[84] which run [respectively] to the left, to the right,[85] and down-

not seen it anywhere else. The difference (and also the resemblance) of the characters used for this transliteration and those used for the name "Harama" (cf. above note 53) is one of the reasons why I tend to think that the *Bikisho* does not refer directly to the *Shittanzō*, but is based on some intermediary source unknown to me.

82 *Fahua lun shuji*, Z 95 353r, b16–v, a5.

83 The following citation is from Annen, *Shittanzō*, T 84, no. 2702, pp. 368c23–369a1. Huijun was a Chinese monk active between the second half of the sixth and the first half of the seventh centuries. The *Silun xuanyi* was originally composed of twelve fascicles; only ten remain and are published in the *Zoku zōkyō*: Z 74. It seems that the passages quoted by Annen are not in what remains today of the text. On this work, cf. *Bussho kaisetsu daijiten*, vol. 7, pp. 307d –308b.

> ward. The two former [scripts] are used in India and [contribute to] the conversion [of human beings]; the form of the characters is the same as *brāhmī* characters, the only difference being that one goes to the right, while the other goes to the left.[86] The youngest brother was Cangjie;[87] he later descended to the land of Han at the time of the Yellow Emperor (Huangdi). He flew down to the seashore, and, looking at the traces left by birds, he created the script called *zhuan*.

The tradition of the "three Brahmā brothers" creating three writing systems can be traced back even further than Huijun, since we find, in the *Chu sancangji ji* (J. *Shutsu sanzōki shū*), a collection edited by Sengyou (J. Sōyū) in the early sixth century, a text entitled *Hu han yijing yinyi tongyi ji* (J. *Kokan yakkyō ongi dōi ki*) reporting a variant of the same myth.[88] Annen also quotes in an abridged form yet another work, entitled *Jianming yuan* (J. *Kenmyōen*) (of which I could determine neither the author nor the date), which relates that myth as well.[89] But the detail that says that Cangjie created the Chinese script by "looking at the traces left by birds on the seashore" is common to both the text of Huijun quoted by Annen and that in the *Bikisho*, so it is very likely that the source (probably indirect) of the latter was the introduction of Annen's *Shittanzō*.

A little detail of the *Bikisho*, according to which the "second brother," called here Bichūten (Viṣṇu), created the script of the Western Barbarian Country, raises a difficulty, because the text of Huijun quoted by Annen says instead that the script created by the second brother was in use in India, just like *brāhmī*. However, I think that we can solve this problem by invoking another passage in Huijun's text also quoted by Annen. Here, Huijun himself quotes an older and well-known author, Xie Lingyun (385–433), who would have written that "the script of the Western Barbarian Country (*huguo*) is

84 *Kharoṣṭhī* is a writing system that was used in north-western India and Central Asia between the fourth century BCE and fourth century CE It belonged to a different family than the *brāhmī* scripts: it traces its origin back to the script used in the Achemenides Persia; its characteristic was that the lines ran from right to left. The legend says that it was invented by a sage (*ṛṣi*) called Kharoṣṭha, who was born from the union between a woman and a male donkey. The *zhuan* script was an old writing system used in China from the Zhu dynasty until the Qin dynasty, i.e. approximately from the twelfth to the third centuries BCE.

85 This is actually the opposite. In *brāhmī*, the lines go from the left to the right; in *kharoṣṭhī*, they go from the right to the left.

86 Another version of this text has "one goes to the left, while the other goes to the right."

87 Cangjie is known in the Chinese tradition as a subject of Huangdi and the creator of the Chinese script.

88 *Chu sancangji ji*, T 55, no. 2145, p. 4b5–9. The same text is quoted (without reference) in the *Fayuan zhulin*, T 53, no. 2122, p. 351b29–c4.

89 *Shittanzō*, T 84, no. 2702, p. 369b5–6.

called *kharo*[*ṣṭhī*] (*qulou shu*); this *kharo*[*ṣṭhī*] is [the result of] the summary made of the *brāhmī* script by the sage (*ṛṣi*) Kharo[ṣṭha] [in order to make it easy to] use."[90] Now, if the two different expressions referring to the *kharoṣṭhī* script, the one used by Huijun himself (*jia shu*) and the other used Xie Lingyun that Huijun also quotes (*qulou shu*), could be considered as identical, then *jia shu* itself could be considered as the script of the Western Barbarian Country.[91]

This brings us to the final issue, namely, the "three brothers" identified as Brahmā, Viṣṇu and the enigmatic Harama, and the further identification of this group with the "three brothers" mentioned in the *Liqu jing* (J. *Rishukyō*). Concerning this issue, Annen writes his own considerations as follows:[92]

> On the three brothers mentioned by the Venerable Huijun, that is to say King Brahmā, Kharoṣṭha, and Cangjie, we can now refer to the three Madhukara brothers in the *Rishukyō*.[93] The Venerable *tripiṭaka* master Bukong [Amoghavajra] says that "the three Madhukara brothers are another appellation for King Brahmā, Nārāyaṇa, and Maheśvara" (quoted exactly).[94] The *Myōtōshō* [by Zenju] says that non-Buddhists (*gedō*) consider Maheśvara as the Body of the Dharma, Viṣṇu as the Body of Retribution, and King Brahmā as the Body of Metamorphosis (abbreviated quotation).[95]

Thus, we can now conclude that the only innovation made by the *Bikisho* (or, probably, by a text unknown to me on which the *Bikisho* itself is based) with regard to the text of Annen is that the name Harama replaced Maheśvara in the original – or, perhaps, it is King Brahmā (Bontennō) that replaced Maheśvara, whereas Harama took the place of King Brahmā.

Finally, another text of interest can be added to this little collection of quotations on the "three brothers." It is an oral transmission (*kuketsu*) of the Shingon school on the "three Madhukara brothers" of the *Rishukyō* ascribed to Gennin (818–87), known as "Nanchiin monk (*sōzu*)," even though this date is probably too early. Here is the text:[96]

90 *Dacheng silun xuanyi* of Huijun quoted by Annen's *Shittanzō*, T 84, no. 2702, p. 369a21–22.

91 We have to note that the term Hu (J. Ko) may in ancient times have designated India itself, not the Western Barbarian Country, an expression usually referring to Central Asian countries.

92 *Shittanzō*, T 84, no. 2702, p. 370a9–14.

93 See *Liqu jing*, T 8, no. 243, p. 785c21–23.

94 Exact quotation of *Liqu shi* by Amoghavajra, T 19, no. 1003, p. 616b1–2.

95 See *Inmyōron sho myōtō shō* by Zenju (723 or 724–97), in T 68, no. 2270, p. 217a11–13.

96 Quoted in the *Kakuzenshō*, T. Zuzō 5, no. 3022, p. 525c26–2; and the two commentaries on the *Goyuigō* cited in the next note. See also Iyanaga (1998b), pp. 25a–26b.

The oral transmission of Nanchiin *sōzu* says:

> The three Madhukara brothers are Brahmā, Nārāyaṇa, and Īśāna; each of them reigns over a country. Brahmā reigns over India, Nārāyaṇa over the Country of the Tang [i.e. China], and Jizaiten over Japan.

Thus, there was a tradition in medieval Japan that ascribed to each of the three deities of the Hindu *trimūrti* the suzerainty over one of the "three countries" (*sangoku*), India, China and Japan, which constituted the main part of the contemporaneous world-image.

Moreover, two medieval commentaries on the *Goyuigō*, the apocryphal "testament" of Kūkai, in which this oral transmission is quoted, insert just after it a passage from the *Commentary on the Mahāvairocana sūtra* stating that the Palace of Maheśvara, at the top of the Realm of Form, is the place where this sutra was originally taught by the Buddha Mahāvairocana.[97] The *Goyuigō hiyōshō*, in particular, adds the following dialogue:

> Question: What can we deduce from the comparison of the oral transmission of Gennin with this text from the *Commentary on the Mahāvairocana sūtra*?
>
> Answer: This [comparison] means that Japan (Nihon) is the Original Country of Mahāvairocana (Dainichi no hongoku): it is the Palace of Maheśvara.

This means that since the Palace of Maheśvara (which is the highest place of the Realm of Form) is the place where the Buddha Mahāvairocana taught the supreme teaching of the *Mahāvairocana sūtra*, and since the same Maheśvara (called, in the oral transmission of Gennin, Īśāna – a name which evokes King Māra of the Sixth Heaven) is reigning over Japan, then, Japan is no less than the "Original Country of Mahāvairocana" and at the same time the "Palace of Maheśvara"!

Conclusion

It has indeed taken us a very long way to understand just a few lines of the *Bikisho* – a typical document of the *honji suijaku* imaginary world – with the help of a number of texts and images that these lines evoke in some way, and on which they were probably based. Fortunately, we were able to find out the main text that was very probably underneath the multiple images unfolding in the passage I examined. The fact that that text was a work by

97 *Goyuigō kanchūshō* and *Goyuigō hiyōshō*, quoted by Itō Satoshi (1995), pp. 72b–73a. See *Darijing shu*, T 39, no. 1709, p. 580a29–b6.

Annen is probably not a mere coincidence. We were also able to see how his influence was decisive on the formation of the mythical and cosmological framework of the *honji suijaku* episteme in general.

Another point that should be noted is the will – a very strong, even desperate will – of the authors of these texts to search for, and reach for, grasp at the most primordial and the highest, and/or the deepest, origin of the world. As a matter of fact, the entire passage of the *Bikisho* that we examined above was dealing in some sense with the "Origin." This quest for the Origin is even more remarkable in documents such as the *Yamato Katsuragi hōzanki* and the *Senkūin himon*. This quest is directed at the same time (in some cases, at least) to the most abstract idea of the deity, hence the stress placed on Ame no Minakanushi, the most abstract deity of classical mythology. Because of this quest for the Origin – which is very probably the result of the will of these authors (and of the people living in medieval Japan and sharing the same episteme) to gain a solid foundation for their own existence, their myths very often have cosmogonic connotations. In Ise Shinto theology, cosmogony was sexualized to the highest degree (Amaterasu = female = Garbhadhātu mandala, opposed to Toyouke = male = Vajradhātu mandala; or Izanagi = male, opposed to Izanami = female, and so on), in a way that closely resembles the Tachikawa-ryū.[98]

One thing that is very intriguing is the role played by Buddhist, or rather Hindu, gods in these Japanese medieval myths. It is comprehensible that, since the quest for the Origin had both a cosmological and a metaphysical nature, and since the only metaphysical framework that existed at that time was provided by Buddhism, it was Buddhist mythology that constituted the main foundation for this mythology. But why did the author(s) of the *Yamato Katsuragi hōzanki* take the pain to unearth a Hindu cosmogony from within the Buddhist Canon – even though that was actually not a very difficult operation, since the *Dazhidu lun* that they quoted was a very common text among all the learned Buddhists of the period? I think that we can answer this question by saying that "Japanese 'paganism' discovered Indian 'heathen' thought, and tried to constitute itself in reference to it."[99] On this point, we can quote a laconic, but impressive sentence from the *Nakatomi no harae kunge*:[100]

> "The eight myriad deities (*yaoyorozu no kamitachi*)":
>
> King Brahmā, the Emperor Śakra, innumerable devas, the Four Great Heavenly Kings, innumerable Brahmā deva-kings, and the eighty-four thousand kami.

98 For an example of this kind of sexualization of cosmology, see Faure (2000).

99 See Iyanaga (1996–7), p. 370.

100 *Nakatomi no harae kunge* in NST 19, p. 44 (and p. 268b); Iyanaga 1996–7, p. 367; Iyanaga 1998b, p. 35. The translation is based on Teeuwen and Van der Veere 199, p. 31.

We must understand this sentence in its literal sense. The "the eight myriad deities" (*yaoyorozu no kami*)[101] are obviously the Japanese kami; but they are *at the same time* also Buddhist, or Hindu gods. Even though this may sound strange, it is easy to understand: from the Buddhist cosmological/metaphysical point of view, all Japanese kami are exactly on the same level of existence as the Hindu deities (though, perhaps, they were felt to be a little inferior, since Japan was considered as a small country very far from the center of the world, which people situated in India, or more precisely at the Diamond Seat where the Buddha had attained enlightenment).[102] The only way people had to think about Japanese deities was according to the model of Hindu deities as they appear in Buddhist cosmology and mythology. Since the ultimate concern for the thinkers of *honji suijaku* mytho-poetics was the origin of the world (*their* world), they looked for cosmogonic myths in the Buddhist mythical corpus, and they found one that met their needs in the Hindu myth quoted in the *Dazhidu lun*. I think that they were conscious of the fact that this kind of myth was not really in conformity with Buddhist doctrine in the strict sense. But this did not stop them – to the contrary, I would think that they were intentionally creating a new type of theology. In doing so, they may have felt that they were only continuing a movement of revolutionizing Buddhism, in the sense that *kenmitsu* ideology was some kind of "perpetual revolution" of Buddhism, in which Buddhism kept surpassing itself in an endless movement.

To make this point, thinkers of *honji suijaku* mytho-poetics could invoke original enlightenment thought, and especially the mythical, cosmological, and metaphysical speculations on deities in Buddhism developed so extensively by Annen. Even deities such as Maheśvara, well known for his "heretical" arrogance, or Māra, *the* enemy of Buddhism *par excellence*, did in some way represent a cosmic and magical power ultimately identical to Buddhahood itself. The metaphysical theory of different levels of existence, such as the different kinds of Buddha-bodies, or the different "wheel-bodies" (*rinjin*) of the Buddha, all of which are represented iconographically by the Two Great Mandalas, could provide them with some very useful theoretical models. The new theology that they were trying to create was a mythical theology of kami-*devas*, built on the model of Hindu mythology as they could unveil it from within the Buddhist mythical corpus. In this sense, I think that it is possible to argue that medieval Buddhist-Shinto was an attempt to create a kind of "Japanese Hinduism" inside Buddhism, itself self-revolutionizing in an incessant movement.

101 Note that this expression, *yaoyorozu no kami*, evokes to many Japanese people of a certain age group the phraseology of the ultra-nationalism of the time of World War II. People were hearing every day that Japan was the country of *yaoyorozu no kami*, protected by the divine force.

102 This belief in Japan's marginality is usually referred to as the notion of *zokusan hendo*, according to which Japan is just "[one of the small and] remote countries scattered like grains of millet." On this notion, see Sasaki Reishin (1987).

Nevertheless, what still remains surprising to me is this enormous system of combinatory associations, identifications, assimilations, linkings. To say, for example, that Amaterasu (and perhaps Toyouke?) is (are) associated to, identified with, or assimilated with the Heavenly Halberd, Māra of the Sixth Heaven, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, "Harama", Maheśvara, Cangjie, Īśāna, and so on, can all this make any sense at all? Expressions such as "associated to," "identified with," "assimilated to," or even "is," are all insufficient and inadequate; it would probably be better to think of concepts such as "corresponding to," "be coincident with," or "reflecting." I would perhaps opt for the image of "reflection," in the sense of mirrors reflecting a play of light and shadow. Thus, the mythical world of *honji suijaku* episteme may be compared to a room in which all interior walls, the floor, and the ceiling are covered with an unlimited number of fragments of mirrors, and on each of these mirrors, changing and moving images are inscribed. We are inside this bedazzling kaleidoscopical room, in which all the images are reflecting one another, creating a hallucinatory show of light and shadow. The "final," ultimate image that this show creates is invariably the solar symbol/mirage of the Buddha Mahāvairocana, which is not different from that of Amaterasu, but it is the product of so many colors and forms that it is almost transparent. What matters is the specific value or mythical background of each image inscribed in each of the fragmented mirrors, and that of the "hallucinations" emerging at the center of the room. I would think that if any kind of "logic" can be conceived in the *honji suijaku* imaginary world at all, it is this play of light and shadow reflecting each other *ad infinitum*. Still, I am astonished by the amount of dark shadows in this play; are we not rather in the midst of an inferno of anxieties?

7

WILD WORDS AND SYNCRETIC DEITIES

Kyōgen kigo and *honji suijaku* in medieval literary allegoresis

Susan Blakeley Klein

Towards the end of the thirteenth century a Shingon priest and court poet named Fujiwara Tameaki (1230s–90s) had the bright idea of incorporating the esoteric Buddhist ordination and transmission system of initiation (Shingon *kanjō*) into the pedagogy of waka poetry, thereby creating a "waka *kanjō*." The details are somewhat vague (the initiations were, after all, secret), but scholars believe that at these waka *kanjō* a "waka mandala" was displayed along with portraits of Sumiyoshi Daimyōjin (the patron deity of waka poetry) and the poets Kakinomoto Hitomaro and Ariwara no Narihira (considered the founders of the Way of Poetry). Incense was burnt, elaborate gifts of money and clothing were presented, and after appropriate poetic mantras were recited, commentaries containing esoteric poetic "secrets" were transmitted to the initiate along with genealogical documents purportedly authenticating an unbroken line of transmission.

Although Tameaki was the son of Fujiwara Tameie (1198–1275) and grandson of the influential poet Fujiwara Teika (1162–1241), he has remained a relatively obscure figure compared to his half brothers Nijō Tameuji (1222–86), Kyōgoku Tamenori (1227–79), and Reizei Tamesuke (1263–1328), whose families' poetic feuding dominated the latter half of the medieval period. Nevertheless, scholars have identified him as the central figure behind the development of both the pedagogical system of secret poetry initiations and the production of numerous secret commentaries. Tameaki, who moved to Kantō and took orders as a Shingon priest in the early 1270s, appears to have been an adept in the syncretic Tachikawa sect of Shingon, which advocated tantric sex as a means to enlightenment.

There is evidence in various texts associated with Tameaki that by the time Tameaki moved to Kantō he was already performing fairly elaborate poetry initiation ceremonies. With the introduction of esoteric waka initiations

Tameaki had to produce suitable commentaries for transmission. These commentaries transformed Heian period canonical texts such as *Ise monogatari* ("The tales of Ise") and the first imperial poetry anthology *Kokinwakashū* ("Collection of ancient and modern [Japanese] poems") into complex tantric allegories by analyzing puns and graphs to uncover hidden esoteric Buddhist meaning. In order to transform these relatively secular texts into esoteric Buddhist allegories, Tameaki developed a new form of literary interpretation that I call etymological and numerological allegoresis.

As an example of etymological allegoresis, in the commentary *Ise monogatari shō* ("Selected comments on *Tales of Ise*") we find an explication of the phrase *mukashi otoko arikeri* ("in the past, there was a man") which appears as the first line of many of the episodes in *Ise monogatari*. In the medieval period, *Ise monogatari* was popularly understood to be the autobiography of the poet Ariwara no Narihira (825–80), and so this anonymous "man of old" (*mukashi otoko* 昔男) was thought to be Narihira. In order to reveal the true, esoteric meaning of the phrase, *Ise monogatari shō* analyzes the graph for *mukashi* 昔 as follows:

> When [the primordial deities] Izanagi and Izanami had sex [thereby creating the country of Japan], one female and three males were born in twenty-one days 十十一日. As this was the origin of Yin and Yang, when Narihira wrote of eroticism (*irogonomi*) he used the word *mukashi* because that graph is written with the elements for "twenty-one days."[1]

This example of etymological allegoresis involves paronomasia: breaking down the character into its component parts and then rearranging those parts to reveal a hidden meaning. Here, the repetitive use of the phrase *mukashi otoko* in *Ise monogatari* is understood to be a clue left deliberately by Narihira. When properly analysed this clue reveals that *Ise monogatari*, although superficially appearing to be about Narihira's frivolous love affairs, is actually grounded in something much more profound: the origin of Japan through the sexual act of Izanagi and Izanami, an act which serves as a model for enlightened tantric sex.

The interpretive method of etymological and numerological allegoresis that Tameaki used so effectively in his commentaries did not appear out of thin air, however. It appears to have first developed within the *honji suijaku* movement as part of an attempt by priests at Enryakuji, the Tendai complex on Mount Hiei, to assimilate the Hie shrines at the foot of their mountain. These efforts resulted in the development of a syncretic school known as Sannō Shinto, named after the Sannō deity worshipped in the Hie shrines. It was in the esoteric writings of these priests that we first see clear examples of etymo-

1 Reizeike-ryū *Ise monogatari shō* in Katagiri Yōichi (1969) (*shiryōhen*), p. 193.

logical allegoresis being used to retroactively rationalize Tendai-Hie syncretism. The strategy was quickly adopted by the syncretic school of Shingon, Ryōbu Shinto, with which Tameaki was undoubtedly familiar.

The reasons for the development of the waka *kanjō* ceremony and esoteric commentaries could be examined from a wide variety of angles. First, textual: what is it about *Ise monogatari* and the *Kokinshū* that incited allegorical interpretation in a way that other texts, such as *Genji monogatari* ("The Tale of Genji"), did not? Second, contextual: what was the political, economic, and religious context for their development? Third, what were the "localized contingencies" for their development? That is, what were the historical circumstances surrounding the individuals involved in the development of the waka *kanjō*, to whatever extent we can determine them? In this chapter I have chosen to concentrate on the religious angle. In particular, I will focus on the relationship between the use of etymological and numerological allegoresis in Tameaki's literary commentaries and its development as a strategy to reinforce the identification of kami and Buddhist deities within the *honji suijaku* paradigm.

The first question we might consider is why *honji suijaku* thinking and its attendant method of allegoresis would have been attractive to Tameaki. One answer is that in developing both the waka *kanjō* and the esoteric commentaries, Tameaki was directly addressing one of the central concerns of medieval poets: the Buddhist argument that the literary arts were nothing but "wild words and ornate phrases" (*kyōgen kigo*), sins of language that would lead the unwary poet to reincarnation in one of the lower, more hellish, of the Six Realms. The difficulties for good medieval Buddhists who wanted to write poetry paralleled the difficulties that had developed slightly earlier for good Buddhists who wanted to continue worshiping the native Japanese deities. *Honji suijaku* thinking, which developed to help syncretize native Japanese and Buddhist deities, proved useful in mediating the apparent conflict between poetic and religious vocations.

"Wild words and ornate phrases": the sin of poetry

The religious allegorization of *Ise monogatari* and the *Kokinshū* was symptomatic of broad changes in the cultural context. In the late Heian and early Kamakura periods (twelfth to thirteenth centuries) there was a broadening and deepening of Buddhist faith. Not only did the esoteric sects of Tendai and Shingon continue to prosper (particularly among the élite), newly arisen Pure Land, Nichiren, and Zen movements were expanding rapidly among the populace. These religious and political changes manifested themselves in the literature of the period. The canonical Heian court texts (*Genji monogatari*, *Ise monogatari*, *Kokinshū*) had taken for their subject the amorous affairs of the elegant court aristocracy. In the Kamakura period the literary focus shifted to the suffering and salvation of military heroes or to religious and

philosophical reflection deemed more appropriate to the anxieties and concerns of authors living in the "degenerate age" of *mappō*.[2] As William LaFleur has argued at length in the *Karma of Words*, poets and scholars of this period felt hard-pressed to justify their frivolous pursuit of the literary arts in terms of the religious values of the age.[3]

Although the early Nara sects do not seem to have objected to secular literature, by the mid-Heian period there began to appear signs of a felt contradiction between the composition of poetry and fiction and the practice of Buddhism. First, any accomplished poet would be expected to compose poems on such topics as love, from the first pricking of desire, through the whole course of a passionate affair, up to and including the deep bitterness felt when all was over. Writing poetry or fiction filled with such descriptions of passionate attachment was hard to justify in view of the Buddhist emphasis on detaching oneself from this world of delusion. Second, the act of writing poetry in and of itself could be viewed as a deflection of purpose from the path of religious vocation. The competition for praise and prestige within court literary circles was seen as a sign of delusory attachment to worldly goals. The following remonstration by the Zen patriarch Dōgen (1200–53) makes this point quite clearly:

> If in the short space of this existence you would cultivate some art or pursue some line of learning, then let it be the Way of the Buddha that you practice, the Law of the Buddha that you study. Literature, poetry, and the like are useless pursuits. I need hardly say they are best abandoned.[4]

A third issue involved the use of language for non-didactic purposes. According to the *Muryōjukyō* (*Buddha of Infinite Life Sutra*) there are ten categories of evil (*jū aku*). Among these ten, there are four evils that involve words: falsehood (*mōgo*), equivocation (*ryōzetsu*), slander (*akku*), and ornate, frivolous speech (*kigo*). Given that the simple use of rhetorical ornament constitutes frivolous speech, writing almost any form of secular literature could be considered sinful. The writer of fiction was further damned by the sin of falsehood. According to the *Kegonkyō* (*Flower Garland Sutra*), such

2 The idea that Buddhist history was divided into three periods, *shōbō* (true Dharma), *zōhō* (imitated Dharma) and *mappō* (declining Dharma) gained a real grip on the Japanese imagination in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries, when the political and social anarchy occasioned by the Genpei Wars seemed to bear out the idea that the world had entered *mappō*, the degenerate age, in the year 1052.

3 William LaFleur discusses the problem of *kyōgen kigo* in detail in the first chapter of *The Karma of Words* (1983, pp. 1–25). H. E. Plutschow (1978) also addresses the problem of *kyōgen kigo*.

4 Dōgen, *Shōbō genzō zuimonki* in NKBT 81, pp. 341–2. Translation from Thomas Harper (1971), p. 49.

sins could lead the writer to an afterlife spent in hell, or to rebirth as an animal or hungry ghost (*gaki*). The mid-Kamakura priest and literatus Mujū Ichien (1226–1312) sums up the three Buddhist objections to literature in his preface to the prose miscellany *Shasekishū* ("Sand and Pebbles," *c*. 1279–83):

> Now we refer to the poetry of "wild words and ornate phrases" as "defiled poetry," because it lures us to attachment, imbues us with vain sensuality, and decks us out with empty words.[5]

The phrase, "wild words and ornate phrases" (*kyōgen kigo*) alludes to an anecdote about the Tang poet Bo Juyi (772–846), popularly known as Hakurakuten in Japan. Towards the end of his life Bo Juyi presented an anthology of his poetry to a Buddhist library. In the preface to this set of poems he wrote:

> My devout prayer is that the karma of writing worldly literature in this life, the error of wild words and ornate phrases, be transformed in lives to come into an instrument of praise for the Vehicle of Buddha, a link that turns the Wheel of Law.[6]

Fujiwara Kintō included this couplet in his collection of Chinese and Japanese verses for chanting, *Wakan rōei shū* (*c*. 1013), under the heading "Buddhist matters" (*butsuji*). Its subsequent popularity can be seen from a description of a "meeting for the encouragement of learning" (*kangakue*) in Minamoto Tamenori's collection of didactic tales, *Sanbōe* ("Illustrations of the Three Jewels," 984).[7] This meeting was held by students from the Northern Hall of the Imperial University in conjunction with monks from the Enryakuji temple on Mount Hiei. The division of the university known as the Northern Hall was mainly concerned with the study of secular Chinese literature, and from the description in *Sanbōe* it appears that the participants saw the meeting as a means to atone for the "sins" of frivolous speech and falsehood involved in their pursuit of the study of literature. This atonement was accomplished by chanting verses from the *Lotus Sutra* and by Bo Juyi.

When Bo Juyi's poems were appropriated into this kind of ritual context, however, it seems likely that the Japanese interpretation of Bo Juyi's words differed from the poet's own. As Thomas Harper has pointed out, Bo Juyi was lamenting having wasted his life on worthless literary pursuits and counted himself fortunate if even the smallest affinity with enlightenment could be salvaged from his poetry. Japanese writers on the other hand applied the *Lotus Sutra*'s concept of expedient means (*hōben*) to the verse, thereby

5 Slightly modified from Morrell (1985), p. 163.
6 Kawaguchi Hisao (ed.) (1982), p. 440.
7 See "The Kangakue of Sakamoto on Hie" in Edward Kamens (1988), pp. 295–8.

yielding the interpretation that Bo Juyi believed even the most vulgar of his writings might serve as an expedient means, and as such might form a link to salvation.[8] Bo Juyi might have appreciated the irony in the university students' belief that reciting his "wild words and ornate phrases" couplet had enough ritual efficacy to erase the bad karma that they had acquired through studying Chinese literature and writing poetry.

In literary criticism, the new intensity of religious faith seems to have been one inspiration for someone such as Fujiwara Tameaki to reinterpret the canonical Heian texts allegorically in an attempt to find religious meaning where little or none had originally existed. By doing so he was able to transform a text like *Ise monogatari*, whose emphasis on love affairs would seem to make it a particularly egregious example of "wild words and ornate phrases," into an "instrument of praise for the Buddha." There is some evidence that in so doing he was simply giving his students what they wanted. For example, Emperor Hanazono (1297–1348) in his eulogy for Kyōgoku Tamekane in *Hanazono tennō shinki* ("Diary of Emperor Hanazono," 1310–32) makes it clear that he was a student of Tamekane rather than of Nijō Tameyo, precisely because he felt that Tameyo had no sense of the important relationship between the Buddhist Dharma and the Way of Poetry:

> Ordinary people do not understand these religious truths. [Nijō] Tameyo, who claims the main descent from Shunzei and Teika, has no idea of such things. They just made no impression on him. He jealously holds to the Six Modes [*rikugi*] of poetry and cannot see the true meaning of the art. Yet most of the world follows him, and the true Way of Poetry is gradually being abandoned . . . In recent years I have met with the holy man of Sōko and learned the tenets of religion. I have also met with Shinsō Hōnin and heard the doctrines of Tendai. I have perused the Five Classics and have come to understand the doctrine of Confucianism. With this knowledge I have thought anew about the Way of Poetry. Truly the distinction between right and wrong in poetry is like that between heaven and earth.[9]

This passage suggests that Nijō Tameyo was not particularly interested in religious allegoresis, and it was this lack of interest in a religious understanding of poetry, rather than any perceived aesthetic differences, that led Hanazono to prefer Tamekane as a teacher. The students and friends who gathered at Fujiwara Tameaki's hermitage in the Kantō included samurai and court officials attached to the shogunate, Buddhist priests, and shrine officials. It is likely that they, like Hanazono, would have appreciated his

8 See Thomas Harper's discussion of these issues in Harper (1971), pp. 48–58.

9 Translation slightly modified from Huey (1989), pp. 158–9.

ability to use the theory of *honji suijaku* to transform secular texts into profound religious allegories.

To understand how Tameaki was able to perform this feat, we need to examine further the concept of expedient means (*hōben*), as well as another concept central to *honji suijaku* thinking, radical nondualism.

Expedient means as an underpinning for Tameaki's commentaries

Hōben (Sk. *upāya*) is most often translated as "expedient means," but it could also be translated as "appropriate modes." It was widely promulgated in Japan through the popular canonization of the *Lotus Sutra*, a Mahāyāna scripture developed specifically to harmonize the three vehicles (or modes) of salvation. The explanatory model the *Lotus Sutra* used to syncretize the conflicting theories was the concept of expedient means. In the *Lotus Sutra* the Eternal Buddha, compassionately realizing that each person is at a different level of understanding, manifests himself in a variety of forms and uses whatever mode might be appropriate to preach his theory of enlightenment:

> I know that living beings have various desires, attachments that are deeply implanted in their minds. Taking cognizance of this basic nature of theirs, I will therefore use various causes and conditions, words of simile and parable [Sk. *upamā* or *upamāna*, J. *hiyu*], and the power of expedient means and expound the Law for them . . . I do this so that all of them may attain the one Buddha vehicle and wisdom embracing all species.[10]

The *Lotus Sutra*'s strategic deployment of the concept of expedient means to syncretize (rather than synthesize) competing world-views is fundamentally allegorical; as an interpretive strategy it manages to "preserve the individual traits of the combining beliefs."[11] The concept of expedient means also promoted the use of parables and similes, thereby encouraging the development of allegorical narratives.[12] In pre-modern Japan the *Lotus Sutra* was the main authoritative ground for texts written as allegories.

As Buddhism spread throughout Asia, it successfully used the concept of expedient means to assimilate local deities and rituals into Buddhism. In Japan it formed the rationalization for the idea that Buddhist deities "dimmed their radiance and mingled with the dust" (*wakō dōjin*) of this world by taking

10 Watson, trans. (1993), p. 32.

11 Fletcher (1973), p. 43.

12 William LaFleur's extended discussion of the *Lotus Sutra* in *The Karma of Words* makes it very clear that the *Lotus Sutra* is a powerfully allegorical text, although because he is working with a rather reduced and negative definition of allegory he ends up claiming that it is not allegorical in the Western sense. See LaFleur (1983), pp. 84–8.

the form of kami. By this means it enabled the transformation and appropriation of older religious forms (native kami and shamanic rituals). Similarly, the idea of expedient means could be used to justify secular texts, such as the *Kokinshū* and *Ise monogatari*, whose original meaning had been problematized by changing religious values.

Expedient means understandably became the conceptual underpinning of the allegorical interpretive strategies developed and used by Tameaki in his commentaries. One of the commentaries' most basic assumptions is that although the *Kokinshū* and *Ise monogatari* may appear superficially to be secular literature (*kyōgen kigo*), once readers are lured by the frivolous pleasure of reading, they will be open to initiation into the true esoteric meaning of the texts. In this way the *Kokinshū* and *Ise monogatari* were transformed into expedient means enticing people onto the path of enlightenment.

Nondualism as a foundation for the concept of waka as *dhāraṇī* and poets as bodhisattvas

According to the concept of nondualism (*funi*) developed within Mahāyāna Buddhism the distinction between the terms of any binary opposition is merely a product of conventional perception; the enlightened mind transcends all such discriminatory thoughts. Within esoteric Buddhism some religious thinkers went so far as to argue that for the truly enlightened the passions are themselves enlightenment (*bonnō soku bodai*) and that the cycle of birth and death is itself nirvana (*shōji soku nehan*). The same mode of thinking was used to argue that the distinction between secular waka poetry and Buddhist literature is meaningless as well: the Path of Poetry and the Path of Buddhism are one, nondual path to enlightenment (*kadō soku butsudō*). A direct corollary of this argument was that waka poetry and the Buddhist magical formulas called *dhāraṇī* (J. *darani*) are ultimately nondual, as summed up in the phrase "waka are themselves *dhāraṇī*" (*waka soku darani*).[13]

This idea was by no means marginal within medieval literary discourse. For example, in the biography of the Kegon priest Myōe Shōnin (1173–1232), we find the poet Saigyō (1118–90) discussing poetry as mantras with the young Myōe. Saigyō argues that poetry that is detached from appearances is a vehicle for enlightenment:

> Such poetry is the true body of the Buddha, and therefore, composing a poem is the same as carving a statue of Buddha. Conceiving a verse is the same as reciting the esoteric True Words [Shingon]. Through this kind of poetry, I can understand the Dharma [Law of

13 For a brief discussion of waka as *dhāraṇī*, see Yamada Shōzen (1967). In English, see H. E. Plutschow's chapter, "Shinto-Buddhist ritual and medieval poetry," in Plutschow (1990), pp. 158–69.

> Buddha]. If you fail to reach this stage, and if you study poetry without care, then it becomes a serious heresy.[14]

The conversation is undoubtedly apocryphal, given that Myōe was only seventeen years old when Saigyō died. Saigyō certainly took the relationship of waka and the Buddhist Dharma very seriously; it is possible that as a teenager Myōe attended a lecture by Saigyō and later reported his words. As part of the hagiographic process the lecture might later have been transformed into a personal conversation. But given how well this comment corresponds with a similar statement by the thirteenth century poet-priest Mujū Ichien, it seems more likely to be a thirteenth century addition. Compare the following from Mujū Ichien's chapter on "The profound reason for the way of poetry" in *Shasekishū*:

> When we consider waka as a means to religious realization, we see that it has the virtue of serenity and peace, of putting to a stop the distractions and undisciplined movements of the mind. With a few words, it encompasses its sentiment. This is the very nature of mystic verses, or dharani . . . Although dharani employ the ordinary language of India, when the words are maintained as dharani, they have the capacity to destroy wickedness and remove suffering. Japanese poetry also uses the ordinary words of the world; and when we use waka to convey religious intent, there will necessarily be a favorable response. When they embody the spirit of the Buddha's Law, there can be no doubt that they are dharani.
>
> The words of India, China, and Japan differ, but their meanings are mutual and their results the same. Through them Buddhism spread, its doctrines were accepted, and the benefits have not been without avail . . . The efficacy of Japanese poetry and the nature of mystic verses are in every respect to be understood as identical with dharani.[15]

This identification of waka and *dhāraṇī*, that a waka in and of itself can have magical efficacy if it embodies the spirit of the Buddhist Dharma, is a basic assumption for Tameaki's commentaries as well. Take, for example, the preface to *Waka chikenshū* ("Collection of revealed knowledge concerning waka"):

> In India there are the words (*kotoba*) of *dhāraṇī*. In China [*dhāraṇī*] were produced in the form of verses (*shi*), and divided into six kinds.

14 From *Toganoo Myōe Shōnin denki*, a biography compiled by Myōe's disciple Girinbō Kikai: *Myōe Shōnin shiryō*, vol. 1, pp. 302–3; translation from Plutschow (1990), p. 22. Also in *Toganoo Myōe Shōnin denki* by Kikai in *Kokubun Tōhō bukkyō sōsho*. vol. 5: *Denkibu*, p. 287.

15 Translation from Morrell (1985), pp. 163–5.

> Among these [six], the style of Japanese poetry has been continuously practiced in our country since the ancient age of the gods even unto this degenerate age . . . Japanese poetry, combining diction (*kotoba*) and sentiment (*kokoro*), is "greatly harmonizing" 大和 and so it is called "greatly harmonizing poetry" (*Yamato uta*, 大和歌).[16]

In other words, Japanese poetry (*Yamato uta*) is the "great harmonizer" that combines the essence of Sanskrit *dhāraṇī* and Chinese Tang poetry. *Waka kokin kanjō no maki* ("Initiation into the waka of the *Kokinshū*") makes the point even more succinctly: "The words of Indian *dhāraṇī* are the words of our country of Yamato's poetry."[17] *Waka kokin kanjō no maki* further argues for the chanting of certain waka as a powerfully efficacious Buddhist ritual, and justifies this by revealing their esoteric links to Sanskrit seed syllables (J. *shuji*, Sk. *bīja*) and Buddhist mantras. For example, *Waka kokin kanjō no maki* claims that each line of the "Naniwazu" (Naniwa Bay) poem from the *Kokinshū* preface can be identified with a Sanskrit seed syllable (A, BI, RA, UN, and KEN) and that the poem as a whole thus functions as a mantra, whose recitation will help one better retain the true meaning of Shingon.[18] In commentaries such as these we find that, far from being an impediment to enlightenment, the "wild words and ornate phrases" of Japanese poetry are so efficacious that the simple act of chanting a poem will lead to better understanding of the true meaning of esoteric Buddhism, and is therefore to be treated as an important esoteric practice.

According to the *honji suijaku* theory, Buddhist deities and kami are "not two, but identical in nature" (*funi dōtai*). Originally, this created a two-tiered effect: the kami were merely "phenomenal appearance," the expedient means by which the Japanese were supposed to be prepared for the higher level understanding of Buddhist "Absolute Reality." However, by the Kamakura period, nondualism was being used to good effect by Shinto apologists within Buddhism: if the kami and buddhas were like waves and water (i.e. inseparable aspects of the same reality) then neither could take precedence.

The Kamakura commentaries argue that kami such as Sumiyoshi Daimyōjin and Tamatsushima Myōjin, who in the medieval period were worshipped as guardian deities of waka poetry, were *suijaku* manifestations whose true purpose was to transmit Buddhist enlightenment through poetry. They also argue that certain important human poets (most often Ariwara no Narihira and Kakinomoto Hitomaro) were incarnations of both kami and Buddhist deities who manifested themselves in human form to further the Path of Poetry as a path to enlightenment.

16 Kunaichō Shoryōbu shō-zō Tameuji hitsu *Waka chikenshū* in Katagiri Yōichi, 1969 (*shiryōhen*), p. 97.

17 *Waka kokin kanjō no maki* in Miwa Masatani (1994), p. 867.

18 Ibid., p. 467.

An example from *Gyokuden jinpi no maki* ("Jeweled transmission of deep secrets") illustrates all three concepts (*honji suijaku*, expedient means, and nondualism) at work:

> The Buddhist Dharma and *Ise monogatari* differ only in name, not in substance. Narihira was incarnated and dwelt in this world, hiding the deep secrets of Shingon in a frivolous tale in order to benefit and enlighten each and every living being about the deep meaning of the profound Dharma. This tale is none other than an esoteric practice of Shingon.[19]

Narihira, originally a Buddhist deity who chose to become temporarily incarnated in human form, wrote *Ise monogatari* as an expedient device. The commentary implicitly assumes that although when one first reads *Ise monogatari* it appears to be a secular text, if read correctly by those properly initiated it will stand revealed as a profoundly religious document: the Buddhist Dharma and *Ise monogatari* are understood as "not two, but identical in nature."

As it turns out, this interpretive strategy based in *honji suijaku* theory was also quite useful in resolving more mundane scholarly disputes. For example, in *Kokinwakashū jo kikigaki* ("Lecture notes on the *Kokinwakashū* Preface") we find the following query about a discrepancy between two important poetic scholars, Ki no Tsurayuki (ca. 872–945) and Minamoto Shunrai (?1055–?1129) regarding which god originated the practice of poetry:

> Query: In Shunrai's diary we find "Japanese poetry was originated by Kunitokotachi no Mikoto." But in Tsurayuki's preface it says that it was originated by Izanagi no Mikoto. Please explain this discrepancy. Also in the *Nihon shoki* ("Chronicle of Japan") we find poems by Izanagi but not Kunitokotachi; why is this?
>
> Reply: Izanagi and Kunitokotachi . . . are one essential body with two names. Because they are in reality only one, Shunrai attributed Izanagi's poem to Kunitokotachi.[20]

The interpretive principle employed here combines *honji suijaku* thinking with nondualism, but with a new twist: the commentary asserts that two kami who appear provisionally to be separate are actually one. We see here how the combination of *honji suijaku* and nondualism could be a convenient and powerful interpretive tool for resolving apparent discrepancies. The more heavily esoteric commentaries use it repeatedly.

Within Tameaki's commentaries the concepts of *honji suijaku*, nondualism,

19 *Gyokuden jinpi no maki* in Katagiri Yōichi (ed.) (1971–86), vol. 5, pp. 536–7.
20 *Kokinwakashū jo kikigaki* in Katagiri Yōichi (ed.) (1986), vol. 2, p. 231.

and expedient means form both the legitimating basis of his use of etymological allegoresis and the content itself. Graphs are most often analyzed to reveal that certain poets were *suijaku* manifestations of kami and Buddhist deities, as well as to prove the nonduality of waka and Buddhist formulas. Given the assumptions with which the interpreters started, these readings could have been predicted in advance. It is perhaps not so much a question of what interpretation would result, but how they would arrive at that preordained reading. Jacqueline Stone has made a similar point with regard to the use of etymological and numerological allegoresis (which she calls *kanjin*-style interpretation) in medieval Tendai secret oral transmissions (*kuden*):

> What all *kanjin*-style readings have in common is that, from a modern perspective, they are *exegesis*, the "reading out" from a text to determine its meaning, though the medieval thinkers who produced them may often have understood what they were doing as uncovering the text's true purport. Rather they are a deliberate *eisegesis* or "reading in" that reconfigures the text in support of a prior insight or philosophical position – in this case, that of original enlightenment. It is this prior insight or position, not the text itself, that forms the basis of interpretation.[21]

As Stone notes, in the case of the medieval Tendai *kuden* the a priori insight used to reconfigure the text is inevitably original enlightenment (*hongaku*). As we shall see, in Tameaki's secret transmissions, each text is revealed to be an instance of a syncretic Shinto-Buddhist/Tachikawa understanding of *honji suijaku* and radical nondualism.

Forms of etymological and numerological allegoresis

The commentaries associated with Tameaki or his disciples can be broadly divided into three levels of initiation. The levels move from fairly exoteric secrets on how to write poetry and the etiquette for poetry meetings, to increasingly esoteric secrets involving complex allegorical interpretation meant to reveal the true religious content of waka poetry. All of the texts that would have been included in the second and third level of "esoteric" initiation include lineage documents that claim divine origin as oracular revelation from Sumiyoshi Daimyōjin and content influenced by the *honji suijaku* theory of hypostasis.

In the commentaries we can discern two types of etymological and one type of numerological allegoresis. These forms of allegoresis focus on proper names (of both humans and deities), on the titles of the works themselves,

21 Stone (1999), p. 158.

on numbers (two, three and five are given special attention), and on any words or phrases that were repeated throughout the text (in *Ise monogatari*, for example, *mukashi otoko*, "the Man of Old").

First, a form of etymological analysis is used which involves pulling groups of graphs apart into their constituent radicals, and then rearranging them to create meaningful sentences that substantiate the author's argument.[22] For example, in the "Nijigi" ("The meaning of the two graphs") section from *Ise monogatari engi* ("Commentary on *Ise monogatari*"), the idea that Narihira was actually Kakinomoto Hitomaro reborn is substantiated by an etymological analysis of the graphs for I 伊 and Se 勢:[23]

(1) hito 人 (4) masa ni 平
(3) umarete 生 (2) maro 丸
(5) tsutome ari 力

> In other words, when you write 伊勢 it is read *Hitomaro umarete masa ni tsutome ari* (Hitomaro was born and naturally made efforts). The phrase "to make efforts" (*tsutome*) means "to propagate the Way of Poetry."[24] These two characters have various readings, but this is their true meaning: "Hitomaro was born as Narihira and propagated the Way of Poetry, leading living beings to the profound secret of Yin and Yang."[25]

An important assumption that underlies this kind of etymological allegoresis is that words have a kind of magic phenomenality. The philosophical basis for this kind of word play having any persuasive authority is that the relation of a graph to its referent is not arbitrary. The body, the dharmas that go to make up that body, and the name attached to the body are indivisibly related; thus correct analysis of a name provides insight into the essence of what is named, and by extension, into the nature of reality. The Sanjōnishi lineage *Waka chiken shū*'s discussion of the meaning of the title *Ise monogatari* makes this clear: "The myriad things arise from their names, in accordance with the principle that the name is the result of the essential nature of the graph."[26] For the religious commentaries in particular, this principle is fundamental; their approach to textual analysis depends on a non-arbitrary relationship between words and both absolute and phenomenal reality.

22 This process is similar to the "notarikon" in biblical commentaries whereby each letter of a word is interpreted as the initial letter of another word, and these words are then combined to form meaningful phrases. See Todorov (1982), p. 104.

23 According to this analysis, the graph 伊 is made up of (1) 人 and (4) 平; the graph 勢 is made up of (3) 生 plus (2) 丸 over (5) 力.

24 *Tsutome* may also have the supplementary meaning here of performing a Buddhist service.

25 *Ise monogatari engi* in Katagiri (1969) (*kenkyūhen*), p. 580.

26 Kunaichō Shoryōbu *Waka chikenshū* in Katagiri (1969) (*shiryōhen*), p. 117.

In the second form of etymological allegoresis, pillow words (*makura kotoba*) and other phrases whose meaning had by the late thirteenth century become obscured with time are assigned homophonic graphs (*ateji*). These assigned graphs are supposed to make clear the phrases' true meaning. For example, in *Ise monogatari zuinō* ("The essence of *Ise monogatari*"), a whole section is devoted to the pillow word *chihayaburu*, which usually prefaces (pillows) the word "kami." In the medieval period, *chihayaburu* was widely written with the graphs 風速振る, "wind-swift-brandishing," and taken as signifying the mighty power of the gods. However, *Ise monogatari zuinō* assigns it the graphs 千葉破る, "thousand-leaves-tearing":

> The phrase *chihayaburu* means "emerging from the womb." It refers to the process by which the soul, having been conceived in a human form, is born. The form of the Five Viscera and the Six Entrails of the mother closely resembles petals of the lotus flower. Conceived in the lotus, when born in the tenth month, the child emerges by tearing (*yaburu* 破る) those thousand-petaled (*chi ha* 千葉) membranes . . . Thus the phrase *chihayaburu kami* refers to the soul.[27]

This unusual reading is used to substantiate *Ise monogatari zuinō*'s argument, based in Tachikawa "spiritual embryology," that the native kami did not exist other than as our own souls (*tamashii*).[28]

Third, we find various forms of numerological allegoresis. Waka are easily divided in two, creating an "upper" part of 5–7–5 and a "lower" part of 7–7. This division allows for innumerable binary homologies, including that of heaven and earth, Yang and Yin, male and female, and most important, the Diamond and Womb-Storehouse Realm mandalas considered central to Shingon Buddhism. Important words made up of two graphs, such as "I-se" 伊勢 in *Ise monogatari* or "Ko-kin" 古今 in *Kokin waka shū*, are also easily homologized this way. For example, in *Gyokuden jinpi no maki*, in a section entitled "Kokin niji no himitsu" ("The deep secret of the two graphs *Ko-kin*"), each graph is assigned six meanings which reveal the true Buddhist significance of waka poetry. The sixth meaning of "kin" is said to reveal that:

> The path of waka may appear superficially to be merely frivolous play, but within it are marvelous Dharma sermons on the True Reality, Disciplined Practice, and the Dharma-body. A person who composes a single poem will close the gate on the three evil paths

27 Kariya chōritsu toshokan zōhon *Ise monogatari zuinō* in Yoshizawa Yoshinori (ed.) (1968), vol. 8, p. 431.

28 I discuss Tachikawa "spiritual embryology" in Klein (1997); see also Sanford (1997).

> [of reincarnation], and if one hears a poem, even for an instant, one is assured of successively better rebirths. By chanting the thirty-one syllables of a waka, one obtains the merit of praising the thirty-one deities. Thus, beginning with the Lord Hitomaro [as] Sumiyoshi Daimyōjin, the thirty-six [poetic geniuses] are all embodiments (*kegen*) of the native gods (kami) and of Dainichi Nyorai. This precious path is an expedient means to salvation, pacifying the hearts of the multitudes, [and clearing their] bad karma. Without it, the wonderful path of Buddhism is difficult to enter indeed.[29]

Thus not only is composing poetry not an impediment to achieving enlightenment, it practically becomes mandatory. And in a section entitled "Naidō ron" ("Explanation of the inner path") we find an analysis of the graphs of I-Se from an esoteric Buddhist perspective:

> The two graphs, I-Se, are Yin and Yang. Yin and Yang are the origin of the manifold Dharma. Thus, what is there that has escaped the benefits of these two graphs? In other words, all the manifold phenomena are the two characters of I-Se. Query: Of course, all the manifold phenomena, even the grasses and trees, dust and sand are the Buddha-body. So how is it that *Ise monogatari* was written as the profound meaning of Shingon?. . .
>
> Reply: Manifesting as Yin and Yang, essentially one with the Dharma Realm, the myriad things appear as the Dharma-body. The absolute and relative reality are equally Dharma and dust, dust and Dharma. To know the Buddha is no different from becoming the Buddha. Thus whether one calls it the Buddhist Dharma or *Ise monogatari*, it is the same essence, with a different name. Narihira transformed himself and having been born in this world, he filled a frivolous tale (*monogatari*) with the profound meaning of Shingon in order to enlighten and benefit all living beings. This tale is none other than a profoundly esoteric practice of Shingon.[30]

Here the characters I-Se are identified with Yin and Yang, the primordial dualism that originated phenomenal reality but which is ultimately essentially one with absolute reality. According to *Gyokuden jinpi no maki*, since there is no ultimate distinction between absolute and phenomenal reality, a frivolous tale like *Ise monogatari* can be the means to enlighten all living beings if its true allegorical nature is understood correctly.

Waka poetry's five phrases (5–7–5–7–7) also become the focus of much attention. The preface of the Kunaichō Shoryōbu *Waka chikenshū* argues that

29 *Gyokuden jinpi no maki* in Katagiri Yōichi (ed.) (1971–86), vol. 5, pp. 549–50.

30 Ibid., pp. 536–7.

writing a poem in five phrases is equivalent to creating a five-storied pagoda (itself equivalent to the Buddha-body):

> When you create a well-formed poem, you create a Buddha of the five roots of goodness and the five powers; the five wisdoms, the five instructions, the five aspects, and the five periods of the Dharma all arise from this source. But if you compose a bad poem, then you are faced with a body of this mortal world and it becomes the five aggregates, the five passions, the five misunderstandings, and the five senses.[31]

Waka chikenshū ups the stakes considerably for writing good poems; there is now a lot more on the line than simply the author's reputation!

It often seems as though numerical homologies are produced for no reason other than a sheer delight in multiples of five. In the opening section of *Gyokuden jinpi no maki*, each of the five phrases of a waka poem are identified with a season, direction, element, color, Confucian virtue, kami, one of the five Wisdom Buddhas associated with the Diamond Realm mandala, and a stage of enlightenment. For example, the second line is identified with Summer, South, Fire, Red, Courtesy, the Leech Child (Hiruko no Mikoto), Hōshō Buddha, and Disciplined Practice.[32] Finally, the thirty-one syllables of a waka poem also come in for their fair share of attention. As we saw above, in *Gyokuden jinpi no maki* the thirty-one syllables are treated as equivalent to thirty-one kami. The *Waka chikenshū* manages to homologize the thirty-one syllables with the thirty-two identifying marks of a Buddha:

> [T]he fixing of syllables at thirty-one must be by analogy with the thirty-two aspects of the Tathāgata. Among these thirty-two aspects is that known as the Unseen Peak; in other words it cannot be seen by the eye, so only thirty-one aspects are actually visible. A poem always contains a meaning (*kokoro*) which does not appear in the syllables but lies hidden. Hence we should think of both poem and Tathāgata as having thirty-two aspects.[33]

This deft interpretive footwork does double duty. First, it manages to make the numbers thirty-one and thirty-two equivalent, thereby providing a solid Buddhist source for the number of syllables in a waka poem. Second, it

31 Kunaichō Shoryōbu *Waka chikenshū* in Katagiri (1969) (*shiryōhen*), p. 98. Slightly modified translation from Bowring (1992), p. 440.

32 *Gyokuden jinpi no maki* in Katagiri (ed.) (1986), vol. 5, pp. 522–4.

33 Kunaichō Shoryōbu *Waka chikenshū* in Katagiri (1969) (*shiryōhen*), pp. 97–8. Translation from Bowring (1992), p. 440.

argues that there is always a hidden meaning to a poem, probably Buddhist, implying that one needs the help of a commentary like *Waka chikenshū* to ferret it out.

It is striking that these more elaborate forms of allegoresis have no precedent in either secular or religious poetry written as allegory. One of the questions that I have been working on with regard to these commentaries is, where did this form of allegorical interpretation come from? In order to understand why, a brief theoretical discussion of allegoresis, the interpretive form of allegory, is necessary.

Allegoresis

Allegoresis often appears when rival world-views come into conflict, diplomatically syncretizing rather than synthesizing so that diverse origins and intellectual styles are preserved. The simple fact that allegoresis was deemed necessary within both the *honji suijaku* movement and in Tameaki's commentaries tells us one important thing about the period: canonical texts were being rendered obscure and outdated by epistemic change. As Frederick Jameson has noted, the great allegorical interpretive systems

> sprang from cultural need and from the desperate attempt of the society in question to assimilate monuments of other times and other places, whose original impulses were quite foreign to them, and which required a kind of rewriting – through elaborate commentary, and by means of the theory of figures – to take their place in the new scheme of things.[34]

Allegorization refashions old texts into consonance with the new, but at the same time in some sense allows the old to continue its existence unchanged: allegoresis is syncretic rather than synthetic.[35] It allows colloidal mixtures of beliefs to exist in layers, refusing to homogenize them into a single dominant doctrine.[36] As a "diplomatic medium of thought" allegoresis "gathers in rather than expels, but at the same time it preserves the sense of diverse origins and intellectual styles."[37] Allegoresis in particular appears to be fueled by a desire for conciliation and accommodation; it often appears when rival world-views clash at their borders.

34 Jameson (1971), p. 10.

35 Syncretism differs from synthesis in that "the former preserves the individual traits of the combining beliefs, whereas the latter would achieve a radical transformation of disparate cultural forces, until a single set among them came to dominate and control the assimilation of other sets as minor premises in the logic of the culture as a whole." Fletcher (1973), p. 43.

36 Ibid., pp. 43–4.

37 Ibid., p. 44.

Take, for example, the early Christian church fathers' theory of "types": key persons, actions and events narrated in the Jewish Bible were historically real themselves but also prefigured later persons, actions and events in the New Testament.[38] This allegorical reading of the Old Testament was necessitated by a conflict between a new (Christian) world-view and an old (Judaic) one that obliged early Christians to develop typology as a way to accommodate the Old Testament into their new world order. They justified this radical rereading of the Old Testament in terms of the New by claiming that it was all part of the Christian God's plan from the beginning.

Within the medieval Japanese *honji suijaku* movement one can see how etymological and numerological allegoresis enabled the syncretic co-existence of kami and Buddhist deities, secular and religious vocation. The Japanese allegorical commentaries that arose in the Kamakura period also followed this pattern, recuperating Heian classical texts for a new and different age. It is also easy to believe, given the serious political and religious changes faced by downwardly mobile aristocrats in the thirteenth century, that allegoresis was fueled by a desire to stem the rapid loss of court culture at any cost, even if it meant transforming canonical works into religious texts more in keeping with the esoteric Buddhist proclivities of the time.

The question remains: where did the etymological and numerological allegoresis that came into widespread use in medieval Japan first arise? It seems likely that homophonic and graphic paronomasia used in Onmyōdō as a technique for prophecy formed the background for the development of etymological paronomasia used in esoteric Buddhism as a technique to syncretize native kami and Buddhist deities. However, their historical relationship remains very unclear. We do know that etymological paronomasia was actively employed by a lineage of scholarly monks that emerged within Tendai Buddhism's syncretic cult of Sannō Shinto. This lineage was known as *kike* 記家, a name that combines the graphs for "record, chronicle" and "family, lineage." It may have been the *kike* who first developed paronomasia as a consistent strategy as part of their attempt to retroactively rationalize Tendai-Hie syncretism.

The Chroniclers of Mount Hiei

The Tendai *kike* specialized in the commentary, interpretation, and transmission of a mass of textual material collectively known as *kiroku* (recorded documents). In an article on the development of the *kike*, Kuroda Toshio

38 St. Augustine expressed this principle with typical epigrammatic wit: "In the Old Testament the New Testament is concealed; in the New Testament the Old Testament is revealed." Cited in M. H. Abrams' discussion of typological interpretation in *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 5th edition (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1985), p. 89. See also Mark Taylor's discussion of typological interpretation (1984, pp. 52–61); and Todorov's discussion (1982, pp. 116–19).

argues that it was not until the late thirteenth to early fourteenth centuries that we find evidence of any systematic attempts to organize the study of these documents, or that we see a specific scholarly lineage being called *kike*.[39] For example, in the early fourteenth century Enkan (1281–1356) wrote in his autobiography that doctrinal study at Mount Hiei was made up of four fields in ascending order of importance: exoteric (*ken*), esoteric (*mitsu*), discipline (*kai*), and documents (*ki*[*roku*]). The field of documents was further divided into six subjects of study: (1) temples and sacred grounds; (2) statues and paintings; (3) miraculous manifestations in the form of kami; (4) protection of the state; (5) rituals; and (6) practices of meditation. From this we can speculate that the *kike* were firmly established on Mount Hiei by the late thirteenth century. However, a variety of texts that fit Enkan's definition of "documents" was being produced as early as the twelfth century, enabling us to assume that something like the *kike* were also in existence at that time.

According to Kuroda, the *kike* monks defined their mission as the study and mystical interpretation of the field of documents (*kiroku*).[40] Their insights were passed on by means of oral transmissions (*kuden*). These oral transmissions, despite their name, did not exclude writing: "one of the peculiarities of oral transmission was its systematic recording of experiences, in-depth interpretations, or essential points of doctrine and practice."[41] The term *kuden* nevertheless implies that even in written form the text can only be correctly understood in the context of master-to-disciple teaching. Transmissions were copied to serve as a reminder for those who received them and also, undoubtedly, because simple possession served as a form of legitimating authority. Copies took the form of secret transmissions written on strips of paper (*kirigami*) as short sentences, verses, or episodic reminiscences. These were then transmitted, and over time they received addenda, revisions, and corrections. By the thirteenth century transmission lineages (*kechimyaku*) began being attached to the *kuden* as an added guarantee of their legitimacy and authority.

Each of Enkan's four fields also had its own initiation and ordination ceremony (*kanjō*). The *kanjō* for the field of documents was called the "initiation concerning dimming of radiance and mingling with dust to protect and benefit the national territory" (*wakō dōjin riyaku kokudo kanjō*). According to Kuroda, the name of this initiation ceremony makes it clear that the ultimate duty of the *kike* was the study of the *honji suijaku* combinatory system of the Hie shrines at the foot of Mount Hiei, because that system held the key to the protection of the state. By carefully studying both contemporary and historical events involving the Hie shrines, the *kike* hoped to better understand when and how buddhas and bodhisattvas manifested themselves as

39 Kuroda Toshio (1989), pp. 143–58. See also Stone (1999), pp. 123–6.
40 Kuroda (1989), p. 149.
41 Ibid., p. 147.

kami to protect the state. And the key to this combinatory system, which came to be called Sannō Shinto, was the study of documents.

Toward the end of the Heian period and throughout the following Kamakura and Muromachi periods, a number of documents offering various rationales for syncretic identifications were composed on Mount Hiei, with the result that the associated kami and buddhas came to be seen as a single but complex, multi-layered entity, to which the name Sannō 山王 was given. The *kike*'s primary goal was to show the ultimate identity of kami and buddhas in the service of the state. In pursuit of this goal, new modes of rationalizing syncretization were developed, including the method that I have called "etymological allegoresis" because it uses etymological paronomasia as a means to syncretize native deities with Buddhism. This method of syncretization appears to have rapidly spread to Shingon Buddhism and then to other sects.

In Alicia Matsunaga's book, *The Buddhist Philosophy of Assimilation*, there is an excellent example of etymological allegoresis used to rationalize the syncretization of the Sannō deity with Buddhist deities and principles. The following is taken from a medieval biography of the Tendai priest Gyōen (?–1047). According to the biographer, the Sannō deity appeared to Gyōen and told him the following:

> Do you know why I am called Sannō 山王? I signify that three truths are one. The three [vertical] strokes of *san* 山 denote emptiness [*kū*], temporariness [*ke*], and the mean [*chū*]. The underlying stroke signifies oneness. *Ō* 王 consists of three [horizontal] strokes standing for the three truths while the center symbolizes oneness. So the two characters have three strokes and one common stroke. That is why I am called Sannō Myōjin. This means that all the underlying truths are in one mind and three thousand minds in one mind. Therefore I protect my Tendai and give peace to the country. There is no name without body and body without name. There is no Dharma without name and there is no name without Dharma. Body is Dharma – Dharma is name. This is called one vehicle. This is the meaning of my name.[42]

Gyōen's biography is found in a collection compiled in the early Edo period from a number of medieval sources, so it is difficult to date. It is unlikely, however, that this kind of etymological analysis would have been produced during Gyōen's lifetime. The similarity of content with a text written by the Tendai monk Shinga (1329–?) makes it more probable that the story was produced sometime in the Kamakura period, when the Sannō deity was

42 Shiban, *Honchō kōsōden (shidenbu)* in DNBZ, vol. 103, p. 680. Translation from Alicia Matsunaga (1969), pp. 190–1.

already being widely worshipped on Mount Hiei and there would have been pressure to tie it to other aspects of Tendai Buddhism.[43] The graphs for Sannō are analyzed to reveal a hidden correspondence with the fundamental three-part Tendai doctrine of emptiness (all dharmas are empty), temporariness (they appear to have provisional existence), and the middle path that unites the other two. These three ways of viewing existence stand in a relation of conditional interdependence, a relation that is summed up in the phrase, *sandai ichijitsu* (three [relative] truths, one [absolute] truth). The two graphs in the name "Sannō" are shown to be made up of three parallel strokes combined with a third unifying stroke, thus graphically symbolizing this relation.

The last part of the passage is particularly noteworthy, for it illustrates the philosophical basis for this kind of word play having any persuasive authority. The body, the Dharma embodied therein, and the name attached to the body are indivisibly related; thus correct analysis of a name provides insight into the essence of what is named, and by extension, into the nature of reality. The Sanjōnishi lineage *Waka chikenshū*'s discussion of the meaning of the title *Ise monogatari* also makes clear the commentary's assumption that names are not simply arbitrary: "The myriad things arise from their names, in accordance with the principle that the name is the result of the essential nature of the graph."[44] For the religious commentaries in particular, this principle is fundamental; their approach to textual analysis depends on a non-arbitrary relationship between words and both absolute and phenomenal reality.

Once etymological allegoresis had been established as a means to assimilate kami into Buddhism, it began to be deployed as a strategy for syncretizing all aspects of kami ritual and associated practices. Take the following homophonic analysis of the term *miko* (usually written 巫女) from a thirteenth century Tendai text, *Yōtenki* ("Record of heavenly radiance"):

> Shamanesses are called *miko*, a term written in this shrine with graphs meaning August Child 御子, because they serve the function of calling upon the compassion of Śākyamuni Buddha and Yakushi Buddha, who appeared originally as the Yin and Yang deities. Here is how this developed: in the past, a certain Jichi-in lived on the mountain. His knowledge had no boundaries. One day

43 Shinga writes, "The Buddha Śākyamuni now has manifested itself at the foot of Mount Hiei as a divine entity known as Sannō. The purpose of this divine entity is to grant its protection to the practice of the Single-minded Threefold Contemplation. The divine entity revealed the following in an oracle to Abbot Kyōmyō: 'My name consists of a horizontal stroke striking three vertical strokes, and of one vertical stroke striking three horizontal strokes.'" Kojima Michimasa and Fukuhara Takayoshi (1976), p. 202; translation from Grapard (1987), p. 226.

44 Kunaichō Shoryōbu *Waka chikenshū* in Katagiri (1969) (*shiryōhen*), p. 117.

> he gave the following instructions to a woman living in Kitsuji: "Go home and become a servant to Sannō. At the time of making offerings, you will begin an invocation with the catalpa bow that will enable you to guess the thoughts of someone without looking directly at that person. When you sound the string of the bow, Amida Buddha will come from the Pure Land, enter your mouth and tell you the thoughts and requests of those people . . . The Original Ground of the Great Deity (*daimyōjin*) at the Grand Shrine is Śākyamuni Buddha, who said "Everything in the three realms is mine. All living beings are my children." So the shamanesses who serve him when he appears in his Manifest Trace form as a kami should be referred to as his August Children.[45]

Here we have an example of paronomasia in which homophonic graphs (*ateji*) meaning "August Child" 御子 are substituted for the usual graph 巫女. These homophonic graphs are then provided with an etymological anecdote that appropriates the shamanic function of shrine priestesses into Buddhist rituals. Predicates of the "true" graphs for *miko* dictate the meaning and function of the real world referent. The priority given to the written graph in passages like this makes it obvious that power inheres in the proper knowledge and interpretation of written signs: they are clues to the essential character of reality. The abundance of homophones in Japanese greatly expands the opportunities for such etymological play, and medieval Japanese scholars, both religious and literary, appear to have taken full advantage of these opportunities.[46]

An example of graphic paronomasia from *Yōtenki* also illustrates that the graph as signifier was thought to have an inherent, non-arbitrary relation to its signified:

> If you add the element meaning "tree" 木 to the left side of the graph usually read *kami* 神, it results in the graph read *sakaki* 榊. This explains why the *sakaki* tree is used in rituals and offerings on Mount Hie.[47]

From our viewpoint today, the reason why *sakaki* was written by combining the graphs for "tree" and "kami" was simply that when the Chinese writing system was introduced, the *sakaki* tree was already the most important sacred tree being used in rituals involving the *kami*. It would make perfect sense

45 *Yōtenki* in ZGR vol. 2, part 2, p. 619; translation modified from Grapard 1987, p. 218.

46 In this regard I believe that there are many more word plays in Nō, especially through the use of homophonic graphs in names, than scholars have allowed up until now.

47 *Yōtenki* in ZGR, vol. 2, part 2, pp. 612–14; translation modified from Grapard (1987), p. 219.

that the Japanese would have created a graph that reflected that use. In the passage from the *Yōtenki*, however, the rationale is reversed: the *sakaki* tree was chosen for use in rituals because the graph used to write its name signaled that it was most appropriate for that purpose. Once again we find the belief that names and the graphs used to write them have a pre-existing relationship with their referent in the real world, and so correct analysis of the graph will reveal those hidden sympathetic harmonies.

A few larger questions still remain. Why did the *kike* lineage of scholarly monks come into existence, along with a mass of textual material transmitted secretly through *kanjō* initiations? Why did this culture of secret transmission move beyond the confines of shrine-temple complexes to become such a widespread feature of medieval Japanese culture generally?

Japanese scholars of religion have tended to look towards internal developments within Tendai for explanations of the first phenomenon. Kuroda Toshio, for example, traces the *kike*'s concern with secret transmission of documents to the increasing emphasis on esotericism within Tendai. By the beginning of the tenth century, Tendai had developed an alternative form of esotericism known as *Taimitsu*, in contrast to Shingon esotericism, which was known as *Tōmitsu*. As esotericism became more important, more emphasis was placed on pragmatic doctrine concerned with contemplation and ritual. Increasing consideration was given to faith proved through practice and religious principles gained through direct mystic intuition, rather than through insights based on systematic theoretical reflection. Although we know that within Japanese esoteric Buddhism at least as far back as Saichō (766–822) oral transmissions were used to transmit matters of faith and religious principle directly from master to disciple, they had not been a primary focus. From the first half of the eleventh century onwards, however, secret oral transmissions were given increasing emphasis at the expense of doctrinal writings. Kuroda sees the growth of oral transmissions as based on "the esoteric tendency to esteem mystical affinities between people, and to set high value on the mystical power of language."[48]

Jacqueline Stone takes the more pragmatic position that the development of the culture of secret transmission within medieval Tendai was related to the development of esoteric ritual performance. According to Stone, although private sponsorship of rituals for the health of the emperor, fertility of imperial consorts, protection of the country, good harvests, etc., was initially prohibited in the early tenth century, by the late Heian period the prohibition was mainly being honored in the breach. Sponsorship of esoteric rituals by individual nobles cemented ties between individual master-disciple lineages of esoteric ritual specialists and specific factions among the ruling élites, thereby playing a role in the system of shifting alliances (*kenmon taisei*) that formed the dominant power structure of the medieval period. As demand for

48 Kuroda Toshio (1989), p. 147.

these rituals grew, and competition among esoteric lineages for aristocratic patronage became more fierce, the rituals became more complex and also more innovative. Stone argues that it was most likely this kind of competition that led lineages to emphasize the uniqueness of their own rites and develop methods of secret transmission.[49] In support of this argument, Stone notes,

> The differences between the schools was not chiefly doctrine but of concrete ritual forms (*jisō*), such as mudras, mantras, and other secret formulas (*hihō*) used in esoteric rituals. What direction the altar should face, what deity should be enshrined as the object of worship (*honzon*) and what form it should take, what mantras or dharani should be recited and how many times, what offerings made, and so forth all came under the category of *jisō*; on their proper performance, the efficacy of the ritual was thought to depend. Such matters readily lent themselves to construction as secret knowledge and were kept hidden and transmitted orally and in private from master to disciple.[50]

In other words, the development of the culture of secret transmissions had more to do with issues of power and cultural capital than with doctrine. One can make a similar argument for the world of medieval poetics. Although scholars today focus mainly on stylistic poetic differences between, say, the Reizei and the Nijō family schools, at the time, the information considered most vital to the continuance of the school, and therefore most secret, was knowledge about the proper protocol for the various highly ritualized events involving waka poetry. Each school of poetry warned their adherents that without their proprietary information on protocol, the beginning poet was likely to commit a grave breach of etiquette. Fujiwara Tameaki may have gone to an extreme when he actually created an esoteric waka ceremony, along with specifications for the objects of worship, waka mantras, offerings, etc. Nevertheless, in the poetry families generally, it was understood that poetic talent was ineffable and could not necessarily be taught; instead it was secret transmissions concretely specifying waka protocol that were transmitted as proprietary family secrets with warnings not to show them to outsiders.

Allan Grapard has suggested that political and economic changes had a decisive effect on the emergence of the culture of secret transmission. The late Heian period was a time of great political and economic insecurity for the aristocracy, who were gradually losing control of the country to warrior families. In addition, a series of natural disasters, graphically described in

49 Stone (1999), p. 108.
50 Ibid., pp. 108–9.

Kamo no Chōmei's *Hōjōki* ("Record of my hut," *c*. 1212), appeared to support the popular notion that the world had entered a "degenerate age" (*mappō*). Grapard argues that the shrines and temples of the cultic centers formalized systematic relations between the kami and Buddhist deities in order to stabilize their doctrinal, political, and economic position. By establishing strong relations between the kami and Buddhist deities, the shrine-temple multiplexes and the families affiliated with them hoped to gain enough unified strength to survive the crises befalling the country.[51]

Both Grapard and Stone acknowledge parallels between the rise of a culture of secret oral transmission within esoteric Buddhism and a similar emphasis on secret traditions among aristocratic poetry families. In fact, the timing and similarities in content and method are striking enough that it is hard not to suppose there was mutual interaction and influence. At the very least it seems clear that forces of political and economic insecurity among the aristocracy encouraged the development of both the *kike* lineages and court families who specialized in poetry.

Neil McMullin provides support for that theory in an article on religious politics of the mid-Heian period. McMullin notes that whereas in the early Heian period monks were able to attain high office in the monastic communities primarily on the basis of two criteria, namely, character (i.e. virtue and intelligence) and seniority in Buddhist orders, this changed toward the end of the tenth century. The turning point came when the eighteenth head abbot of Enryakuji, Ryōgen (912–85), adopted as his successor a younger son of Fujiwara Morosuke (908–60), the head of the dominant Northern branch of the Fujiwara at the time. Whereas Ryōgen himself came from an obscure background and reached the heights of the sacerdotal élite through sheer intelligence and ambition, after his death, at least in the case of Enryakuji, "blood took precedence over brains; it became much more important for a monk to have the proper family lineage than to have a profound knowledge of the sutras, a reputation for holiness, or seniority in orders."[52] The "aristocratization" of élite levels of the Tendai hierarchy became increasingly widespread until by the period 1070 to 1190 only ten percent of monks who became the head abbots of Enryakuji, the chief abbots (*bettō*) of Kōfukuji, or who figured prominently in the annual court-sponsored lectures on the sutras came from a commoner (*shomin*) family background.[53]

I believe that the development of secret oral transmissions among the *kike* is not unrelated to the fact that the *kike*, despite being clerics, were often handing down these traditions to their own sons (*shintei*, "true disciples").

51 Grapard (1992), p. 79.

52 McMullin (1989b), p. 136. Jacqueline Stone discusses some of the same issues (1999, pp. 110–14).

53 See the statistics quoted by Jacqueline Stone (1999, pp. 110–11) from Hirata Toshiharu's research (Hirata, 1965, pp. 105–8).

The graph for *ke* (家, family) in *kike* thus functioned literally, not in the metaphorical sense of the term as "lineage," which is the more usual meaning in religious institutions. Because the master was often transmitting, not to his best and brightest disciple, but to his son, some of the same difficulties that plagued poetry families at court appeared. The most obvious problem was dealing with incompetent offspring. In poetry families, the son was supposed to be capable of writing superlative poetry. In religious families, the son needed to be good at theorizing and disseminating religious doctrine. In both cases any perceived lack in aptitude could now be replaced, or at least supplemented, with a family tradition of secret knowledge that was resistant to more rationalized forms of theory. This secret tradition was based on knowledge gained through actual personal experience of historical events (passed down since antiquity within the family) or knowledge gained through mystical experiences, such as dream oracles from a deity. Because it was anecdotal and mystical knowledge, it could not be arrived at through the kind of logical deduction that informs theoretical treatises. It appealed to a different kind of authority, that of tradition, rather than persuasive logic. Armed with the superior authority of this tradition, even a mediocre son could assert his right to lead, whether within the religious hierarchy or in court poetry circles.

There is at least one other indication that the oral transmissions developed by the Tendai *kike* families might have been influenced by developments within the secular poetry families. The primary method used to rationalize and reinforce connections between shrines and temples in oral transmissions (as in the examples given above) was based on techniques borrowed from poetic composition, particularly visual analogy and punning word play. Given that the Tendai *kike* were often also aristocrats, presumably well versed in the composition of waka poetry, it makes sense that they began to employ poetic techniques that played with linguistic and visual metaphors. In other words, the aristocrats who by the late Heian period had taken over a majority of the important positions in the Buddhist hierarchy, especially the Shingon and Tendai sects, would have naturally used the poetic techniques of metaphor, association, and word play with which they were already so familiar.

Subsequently Fujiwara Tameaki took these techniques, which had been realigned through their immersion in esoteric Buddhist-kami syncretism, and reapplied them to secular poetry. He used the techniques of etymological allegoresis developed within Sannō Shinto (and rapidly incorporated into Shingon's version of syncretic Shinto, Ryōbu Shinto) to transform relatively secular texts, the *Kokinshū* and *Ise monogatari*, into complex religious allegories. In doing so he was finally able to finesse the problem of "wild words and ornate phrases" that so bedeviled medieval poets.

Conclusion

In the context of a collection of essays on *honji suijaku* there is not enough space to thoroughly discuss the broader political and economic context that influenced the emergence of the waka *kanjō*, or the particular circumstances of Tameaki that might have encouraged him to create these strange commentaries. Although much research has gone into the phenomenon of *honji suijaku*, the development of etymological allegoresis as a means to support and reinforce *honji suijaku* identifications between buddhas and kami is only beginning to be studied by religious scholars. As for literary scholars, the application of etymological allegoresis to literary texts seems to so obviously falsify the meaning of the text (to whatever extent we can understand that meaning in terms of its original historical context) that most find it impossible to take it seriously. However, whereas contemporary scholars of medieval Europe treat Augustine's or Aquinas's allegorical interpretations of the Hebrew Bible as sincere attempts to bring it into consonance with Christian scripture and theology, scholars of medieval Japanese literature have denigrated esoteric allegoresis of *Ise monogatari* and the *Kokinshū* as interpretation in bad faith. It is true that the motivation for these texts is somewhat suspect; one cannot help noticing that the performance of initiation ceremonies was quite lucrative. Perhaps, however, as more texts of Tachikawa Shingon and syncretic kami traditions are uncovered and published, and their influence on the writing of the commentaries better understood, it will be possible to see Fujiwara Tameaki and others involved in the production of these commentaries as participating in a religious movement that they truly believed in. At any rate, notwithstanding the suspect motivation of the medieval allegorists, these commentaries are replete with cultural assumptions whose interrogation is vital for a fuller understanding of the relations of religion and literature in the late Kamakura period.

8

"BOTH PARTS" OR "ONLY ONE"?

Challenges to the *honji suijaku* paradigm in the Edo period

Bernhard Scheid

The year 1600 is one of the most significant markers in our perception of Japanese history. It signifies the beginning of a new political order, an age of more than 250 years of peace and stability. Compared with the century that preceded it, commonly known as the period of Warring States (*sengoku jidai*), the difference in political order could hardly be greater. Naturally, we would expect the change in political circumstances to have had an impact also on intellectual and religious history. This anticipation notwithstanding, it is far more difficult to determine the success of religious beliefs or philosophical ideas than the victory of a political group. Thus, opinions vary when it comes to the question what the predominant innovations in early modern intellectual history actually consisted of. After the "discovery" of Tokugawa Neo-Confucianism by scholars such as Maruyama Masao, the Shinto of that time has gradually become a focus of research. We are now beginning to acknowledge that besides the philosophy of Zhu Xi, indigenous beliefs in the kami were a source of fascination for intellectuals of the early modern period. However, we are still somehow groping in the dark when it comes to the religious ideas of the Shinto and Buddhist priesthood at the beginning of the Edo period – let alone the general populace. This is particularly true in the case of early modern developments of Shinto, with *honji suijaku* and its ritual expressions in the background.

In this chapter, my main aim is to offer some evidence for the fact that during the early Edo period, there actually existed a Shinto paradigm different from *honji suijaku*, while, at the same time, medieval forms of belief in the kami continued to exist. Of course, "non-*honji suijaku*" conceptions of the kami had been developed already in the medieval period, for instance in the form of Watarai or Yoshida Shinto. But these were secret teachings for specialists, unknown to the common people. The scattered

religious incidents from the Edo period discussed in this essay indicate, however, that in contrast to previous times, non-Buddhist or even anti-Buddhist forms of kami worship were commonly recognized and contrasted with Buddhism and Buddhist kami doctrines. This implies that Shinto had become conceivable as a religion of its own and as an alternative to Buddhism. As I will explain in more detail below, this perception of Shinto is intimately connected with the rise of Yoshida Shinto; but at the same time it developed in directions that were not at all intended or envisaged by the Yoshida. Before giving some examples of this phenomenon, I will focus on changes in the conception of Shinto within the Yoshida tradition itself, in order to explain the "orthodox" Yoshida point of view.

The Yoshida typology of Shinto

> In our days, [the expression] "shrines of two parts" (*ryōbu no yashiro*) has become the usual term for shrines administrated by both priestly lineages (*shake*) and Buddhist shrine monks (*shasō*). However, it is a mistake if, by analogy, shrines that are administrated solely by priestly lineages are called "one-and-only shrines" (*yuiitsu no yashiro*). When we say *yuiitsu*, we do not mean "single" as opposed to the "combination of two parts" (*ryōbu no shūgō*). We mean the One Principle in Heaven and Man, that is, *sōgen* Shinto . . . There is no opposition of *yuiitsu* versus *ryōbu*.[1]

This passage, by a Yoshida priest of the late eighteenth century,[2] reveals a discussion about two Shinto-related terms that are nowadays familiar only to specialists of Shinto history: *yuiitsu*, a term that is now understood as the self-designation of Yoshida Shinto, and *ryōbu*, now used as a collective term for certain medieval Shinto discourses in the context of esoteric Buddhism. Judging from this quotation, however, these terms were not only in common use in the mid-Edo period, but were also understood quite differently. According to the author, *ryōbu no yashiro* ("shrines of two parts") indicated shrines that were run by Shinto priests and Buddhist monks together, while the term *yuiitsu no yashiro* ("one-and-only shrines") referred to shrines run by Shinto priests alone.

This passage is taken from the *Shingyō ruiyō*, a text written in 1779. Yoshida Shinto was at that time probably still the most influential school in the world of kami ritual and thought, but was faced with increasing criticism from various other groups. The *Shingyō ruiyō* is intended as a defence against

1 *Shingyō ruiyō*, ST, vol. Urabe Shintō jō, pp. 233–4.

2 According to the preface of ST, vol. Urabe Shintō jō (p. 24), the text was written by a certain Machijiri Kazuhara, whom Nishida Nagao identifies as Yoshida Kanehara (1741–99), a descendent of the main lineage of Yoshida priests.

this criticism, refuting current "misunderstandings" about Yoshida Shinto item by item. The item in question is entitled "The lineages of Shinto" (*Shintō ryūha no koto*), and is based on a famous passage from the Yoshida classic *Yuiitsu shintō myōbō yōshū* (hereafter *Myōbō yōshū*), where three different types of Shinto are discussed.[3]

Although the term "Shintō" ("Way of the Kami") was used already by several medieval authors to indicate a specific Japanese Way distinct from the Indian "Way of the Buddha" (*butsudō*) or the Chinese "Way of Confucius" (*judō*), it was Yoshida Kanetomo who made the first attempt to define this term more specifically. In order to do this, Kanetomo distinguished between several categories of the kami Way, termed *honjaku engi* Shinto, *ryōbu shūgō* Shinto, and, last but not least, *genpon sōgen* or *yuiitsu* Shinto. This last category was considered to be the purest form of Shinto that dated back to the Age of the Gods, and was therefore labelled the "One-and-Only Shinto," while the other two were both influenced by Buddhism, albeit in different ways. The expression *honjaku engi* is a contraction of *hon* and *jaku* on the one hand, and *engi* (here: shrine histories) on the other. It refers to the Shinto of shrines that maintained specific ritual and mythological traditions according to their own shrine histories, but at the same time accepted the teaching of the Buddhist divinity, that is their *honji*, as their guiding spiritual principle.[4] The expression *ryōbu shūgō* (lit. "combining two parts") is explained somewhat differently. In esoteric Buddhist doctrine, the term *ryōbu* refers to the two realms of Dainichi Nyorai, the *taizōkai* (the Womb Realm) and *kongōkai* (the Diamond Realm). *Ryōbu shūgō* Shinto is explained as a Shinto teaching that associates these two realms with the two shrines of Ise,

3 It is generally assumed that the *Myōbō yōshū* was completed in 1484–5. The term *ryōbu shūgō* Shinto, however, appears as early as 1470, in Kanetomo's *Sōgen shintō seishi* ("The vows of *sōgen* Shinto," see Kubota Osamu (1959), p. 426). For a translation of these vows into German, see Scheid (2001), pp. 116–17. For an English translation of the entire *Myōbō yōshū* see Grapard (1992c). Grapard's translation reads very fluently but detracts sometimes from my interpretation of the text. In this chapter, I therefore use my own rendering of the text, based on my German translation (Scheid, 2001).

4 The *Myōbō yōshū* contains a general definition of each term, to which an alternative designation and a short remark are added (see NST 19, p. 210). The general definition of *honjaku engi* Shinto reads:

> Every shrine [belonging to *honjaku engi* Shinto] has set up its own secret traditions about the origins of its history (*engi no yurai*) concerning the first manifestation (*kegen*), descent (*kōrin*), and invocation (*kanjō*) [of its particular kami]. Hereditary sacerdotal lineages (*ruise no shikan*) transmit these traditions orally. Furthermore, they practise the Dharma-flavour (*hōmi*) of their *honji* [buddha] and thus imitate the doctrinal teachings of [*yuiitsu* Shinto's] Inner Purity.

To this, the remark is added:

> [This Shinto] may also be called "Shinto that transmits shrine ceremonies" (*sharei denki no shintō*).

the Outer and the Inner Shrine.[5] From a modern point of view, this definition seems to include what modern scholars call *ryōbu* Shinto (esoteric kami lineages created predominantly by monks from the esoteric Shingon school), as well as Watarai Shinto and other Shinto lineages that developed in close contact with esoteric Buddhism during the medieval period. In doctrinal terms, Yoshida Shinto, too, may be included in this category of Shinto, since it also draws heavily on esoteric Buddhism. From the Yoshida perspective, however, their tradition was completely different and unique, and worthy of the designation "One-and-Only Shinto."

When we compare the original typology of Shinto lineages in the *Myōbō yōshū* with the definitions given in the *Shingyō ruiyō* (written about 300 years later), we notice some interesting differences. While the term *honjaku engi* is defined in almost the same way (albeit somewhat abbreviated),[6] the definition of *ryōbu shūgō* Shinto ("Shinto that combines two parts") differs considerably. The eighteenth century text reads:

> *Ryōbu shūgō* Shinto combines kami and buddhas. It is called thus because monks such as Dengyō, Kōbō, Jikaku, and Chishō [that is, Kūkai, Saichō, Ennin, and Enchin] combined what they learned about the essence of the Way from the ancestors of the Yoshida, with their belief in the teachings of the Buddha, and thus expounded this Shinto.[7]

Also the *Myōbō yōshū* mentions these four Buddhist monks as the founders of *ryōbu shūgō* Shinto,[8] but it understands the term *ryōbu* clearly in its esoteric definition, as the two realms of Dainichi, while *shūgō* refers to the association of these two realms with the two shrines of Ise. The later Yoshida

5 The general definition of *ryōbu shūgō* Shinto in the *Myōbō yōshū* is (NST 19, p. 210):

> They took the [mandalas of] the Diamond and the Womb Realms and assimilated (*narau*) them with the Inner and the Outer Shrine [of Ise]. They took the various Buddhist deities and united (*awasu*) them with the various kami. Therefore [this lineage] is called *ryōbu shūgō* Shinto.

To this, the remark is added:

> [This Shinto] was invented by Dengyō, Kōbō, Chikaku, and Chishō . . . Therefore it is called "the Shinto of the Great Masters" (*daishiryū no shintō*).

6 The *Shingyō ruiyō* definition of *honjaku engi* Shinto reads (ST, vol. Urabe Shintō jō, p. 233):

> The transmissions of the circumstances concerning invocations (*kanjō*), traces (*suijaku*), and manifestations (*kegen*) of a certain shrine [deity] are called *honjaku engi* Shinto or "Shinto that transmits shrine ceremonies" (*sharei denki no shintō*).

7 *Shingyō ruiyō*, ST, vol. Urabe Shintō jō, p. 233.

8 Cf. note 5. In the medieval period, these four monks figured prominently as the authors of numerous apocryphal Shinto texts.

text, however, drops Ise and interprets *ryōbu* on the basis of its literal meaning, "two parts," as referring to "kami and buddhas," or their respective teachings. According to this definition, it should be possible to apply the term *ryōbu* to all forms of Shinto-Buddhist combinations, provided they can be traced back in some way to Saichō, Kūkai, Ennin, or Enchin.

Accordingly, the author sees no problem with the expression *ryōbu no yashiro* ("shrines of two parts") as referring to all shrines run by Shinto priests and Buddhist monks together. This, however, makes it virtually impossible to distinguish "shrines of two parts" from shrines that follow the *honjaku engi* pattern, the first category of the *Myōbō yōshū*. And indeed, it would appear that only two of the original three categories of Shinto are important to the later Yoshida author: *ryōbu* and *yuiitsu*. Although he uses a comparatively loose definition of *ryōbu*, he argues that an analogous definition of *yuiitsu* is not correct. *Yuiitsu* does not refer to non-Buddhist forms of Shinto in general, but only to Yoshida Shinto.

It is at this point that the later Yoshida text finally brings in the first of the three kinds of Shinto. At the end of the passage in question,[9] the author specifies which institutions should not be regarded as *yuiitsu*. He mentions the shrines of Ise, Kamo, Izumo, and Suwa, and stresses that these are not dominated by Buddhist temples, and are therefore guardians of certain ancient, secretly transmitted Shinto rituals. Yet, they are not in possession of the True Way of the kami which is *yuiitsu* Shinto. Therefore, the *Shingyō ruiyō* places them in the *Myōbō yōshū*'s first category (*honjaku engi* Shinto); but it uses an alternative term, namely "Shinto that transmits shrine rituals" (*sharei denki no shintō*), which can be traced back to an additional remark to the *Myōbō yōshū* definition (see note 6 on p. 207). Thus, the Ise shrines, for instance, have been moved from the category of *ryōbu shūgō* to that of *honjaku engi* or *sharei denki*.

This shows that early and late Yoshida texts used the same terminology in their descriptions of Shinto, but made them mean something completely different. In the *Myōbō yōshū*, there is the narrowest, but most important category of *yuiitsu* (or *genpon sōgen*) Shinto, which applies to only one shrine and its custodians, the Yoshida; then, there is the esoteric combination of Ise and Dainichi, which appears to be limited to a small number of religious institutions; and finally, there is *honji suijaku*-based Shinto, which covers the vast majority of shrines. In the *Shingyō ruiyō*, by contrast, there is the category of *yuiitsu*, applying to all Yoshida-affiliated institutions or beliefs,[10] the category of *ryōbu*, covering the still vast number of Shinto-Buddhist combinatory institutions; and a last category, termed *sharei denki*, referring to Ise and a small number of other ancient shrines that are not formally

9 ST, *Ronsetsu-hen*, *Urabe Shintō jō*, p. 234.

10 The text specifies that also Buddhist monks, *yamabushi* and Yin-Yang priests can be followers of *yuiitsu* Shinto if only they search for the True Way of Japan.

affiliated with Buddhism – but this is no reason (according to the *Shingyō ruiyō*) to call them equally *yuiitsu*. Such a usage is explicitly criticised by the author: obviously he was worried that Yoshida Shinto might lose its self-proclaimed uniqueness if all more or less "purist" Shinto institutions were to be called by the same label. At the same time, one may assume that this was precisely what had happened at that time. In any event, it would appear that the term *ryōbu* had become a common designation for Shinto-Buddhist combinations, not only in everyday discourse, but also in the language of priests such as the Yoshida themselves.

Kaempfer's views on Shinto

This last assumption is backed up by the travelogue of a foreign observer, the German physician and scientist Engelbert Kaempfer, who travelled in Japan in the years 1691 and 1692, about one century before the *Shingyō ruiyō* was drafted. Kaempfer's observations are commonly regarded as the first systematic and analytical description of Japan by a European author. In two recent publications, the historian of Shinto Klaus Antoni has pointed out the wealth of information contained in Kaempfer's works on religion in general, and on the Shinto of the late seventeenth century in particular.[11] Growing awareness of Kaempfer's contribution to our understanding of Japanese cultural history is reflected also in a number of recent symposia on his life and work,[12] and in a new edition and translation into English of his original manuscript, by Beatrice Bodart-Bailey (1999).

Let me refer directly to the part of Kaempfer's report that is related to the topic of this chapter. Kaempfer offers a description of the Shinto priesthood, and begins his observations by referring to the typical *kannushi* as arrogant and stand-offish with regard to other religions. This is due, he thinks, to their "incredibly naive" teachings and their lack of sacred texts, for which they have to find some compensation. Their lack of sophistication also explains why Buddhism was accepted so readily in Japan, Kaempfer suspects.

Subsequently, he describes the world of Shinto as consisting of two major groups.

> The first is called *yuiitsu*, meaning "orthodox," and they keep the ancient belief and customs of their fathers without deviating even the breadth of a hair from the old path of darkness. But there are so few of them that there are more *kannushi* than followers. The second is called *ryōbu*, and they are syncretists. To attain greater enlightenment and for the safety of their souls, they attempt to combine the religion of their fathers with the foreign religion. They believe that

11 Antoni (1997) and (1998).

12 See Haberland (1993); Bodart-Bailey and Masarella (1995).

> the soul of Amida (who is revered as savior by all other sects of the imported religion) entered their highest god, Tenshō Daijin, the seed of light, and the sun. Most adherents of Shinto belong to this sect.[13]

Thus, Kaempfer defines *ryōbu* as "syncretic" and *yuiitsu* as "orthodox" forms of Shinto worship. He regards *yuiitsu* as both truly original and stubbornly conservative, but adds that only a small minority of Shinto believers, mainly Shinto clerics (*kannushi*), adhere to it. In spite of these critical remarks, Kaempfer describes Shinto as "the most important [religion] in status, but not as regards the number of its adherents."[14] Together with Kaempfer's quite detailed knowledge, this characterisation indicates that his Japanese informants must have had some affection for Shinto as a whole, and for that orthodox "Juitz"-sect (to quote Kaempfer's original spelling) in particular. On the other hand, Kaempfer's use of *yuiitsu* and *ryōbu* would at first sight appear to be mistaken, at least in the light of the definition of the *Myōbō yōshū*. From the perspective of the *Shingyō ruiyō*, however, his understanding is exactly the same as the "usual understanding of our days" that this work criticizes: *ryōbu* and *yuiitsu* are seen as two opposing forms of Shinto, one prone to Buddhist influence, the other meticulously avoiding any contact with foreign, "unclean"[15] religions.

In the following, I will discuss a few Japanese case studies that may help us to contextualise Kaempfer's perception of Shinto in the early Edo period. These examples are taken from legal conflicts within the religious world of the mid-seventeenth century, shortly before Kaempfer's travels. One should keep in mind that this was around the time when the bakufu issued its first Regulations for shrine priests (*shosha negi kannushi hatto*, 1665), which explicitly granted the Yoshida the privilege to decide the ranks of minor shrine priests.[16]

13 *History of Japan*, Bodart-Bailey (1999), p. 108.

14 Bodart-Bailey (1999), p. 103. The German original actually defines Shinto as "dem Range nach die vornehmste Religion" (Antoni, 1997, p. 94).

15 Kaempfer writes on Shinto clerics: "they stay away from the priests of other religions, treating them as unclean undertakers" (*History of Japan*, Bodart-Bailey, 1999, p. 108).

16 These regulations contain only five paragraphs (see for instance *Shintō jiten*, pp. 116–17). Two of these, §2 and §3, relate to the ranking of shrine priests. This was formerly a matter for the court, but only a few traditional shrines maintained direct contact with certain *kuge* families (in this case called *tensō*, "intermediaries") who ensured that their claims to certain ranks were acknowledged. While the bakufu respected these traditional connections, they aimed at the same time to build up an institution that could cover all shrines. For some reason they found the network of licences already developed by the Yoshida appropriate, and granted them the right to act in lieu of the court. Interestingly, the ranking of shrine priests was combined with the right to wear robes of specified colours. Thus, the regulations mention nothing else than the right of the Yoshida to decide whether a priest was entitled to wear robes of colours other than white (white meant "no rank"). Indeed, a most ambiguous regulation.

Shinto at Hie Taisha

Some years before Kaempfer's visit to Japan, the opposition of *yuiitsu* versus *ryōbu* surfaced in connection with a shrine that could be regarded as a perfect example of Kanetomo's *honjaku engi* category, namely Hie Taisha, the shrine complex at the foot of Mount Hiei in worship of Sannō Gongen, the guardian deity of Tendai Buddhism.[17] Here, a legal dispute occurred between priests of the Hie Shrine and their traditional superiors, the monks of the Enryakuji temple complex on the mountain. The court proceedings are documented in detail in an essay by Satō Makoto (1993),[18] to which I refer in the following.

Like Enryakuji, Hie Taisha had been severely damaged by Oda Nobunaga's military assault on Mount Hiei in 1571. Attempts to rebuild this famous religious site date back to the reign of Hideyoshi, but neither the temple nor the shrine had been able to regain fully their medieval glory. Moreover, the administrative centre of the Tendai sect had been shifted to the East, to the Rinnōji in Nikkō and the Kan'eiji in Edo (also called Tōeizan, the "Mount Hiei of the East"). In 1601, when property rights were newly allotted, the whole complex received 3,000 *koku* from the *bakufu*, of which 402 *koku* were apportioned to the Hie Shrine.[19] In terms of administration, the shrine was put under the supervision of three administrative functionaries from the Enryakuji (the *san shugyōdai*), who were also responsible for the temple town of Sakamoto. The ritual duties of the shrine, however, were administered by two traditional sacerdotal lineages (the Shōgenji and Juge families), both descended from an ancient priestly family, the Hafuribe.

The first dispute arose in 1670. The shrine priests complained of severe economic hardships, which were aggravated by an increase in shrine personnel. They demanded, among other things, the exclusive right to exploit the forests surrounding the shrine precincts, which at the time were managed not by themselves but by the monks of the temple. But concrete economic disadvantages such as this were not the only reason for the priests'

17 The Hie Shrine consists of several sub-shrines dedicated to individual kami. However, probably since the time of Saichō, the name Sannō (lit. "king of the mountain") refers to the guardian deity of the Enryakuji on Mount Hiei. This Sannō was gradually conceived as comprising the totality of kami worshipped at Hie. In Enchin's (814–91) time, the appellation *Sannō sansei* (the three Sannō sages) applied to the three main shrine deities who were later collectively called Sannō Gongen. Medieval texts such as *Yōtenki* (1223), *Sange yōryakki*, and *Enryakuji gokoku engi* are regarded as the earliest examples of the combinatory doctrine that is now called Sannō Shinto (*Shintō jiten* p. 433). These texts regard the deity of Sannō as the manifestation of a large number of beliefs, doctrines and personalities, ranging from the *Lotus Sutra* to the Big Dipper, and are probably best described as a polymorph body of beliefs based on the *honji suijaku* paradigm. (See also Grapard 1987, and the Introduction to this volume.)

18 Besides official Tokugawa records, Satō draws much information from *Gyōjo hōsshinnō nikki*, a diary of the Tendai abbot Gyōjo (1640–95) who had lived at Enryakuji as an imperial prince (*monzeki*) since his early childhood.

19 Satō (1993), p. 109.

objections against the temple administration. They also protested against the monks' interference in shrine ritual. In particular, the monks had taken over part of the inauguration ceremonies of the Hachiōji shrine, that had been restored in 1669. This was obviously the most offensive, but not the only case, where Enryakuji monks infringed upon the professional sphere of the Hie priests.

In 1670, the quarrel appears to have been settled after minor concessions from the temple. However, the issue emerged again in 1680, and subsequently involved the bakufu authorities in Kyoto and Edo, as well as the highest organs of the Tendai sect in Edo and Nikkō. In response to the priests' repeated complaints about ceremonial matters, the Tendai monks became increasingly explicit in accusing the priests of diverting from their traditional faith, or rather from their traditional form of Shinto, which the Buddhist authorities claimed to be "*shūgō* Shinto." Instead, the monks maintained, the priests were secretly following "*yuiitsu.*" In their first documented reactions, the priests countered these accusations by pretending complete ignorance of theological matters. They simply stated that they had no idea about the difference between *yuiitsu* and *shūgō*.[20] When the issue was taken to the authorities in Edo in 1683, the Buddhist functionaries of Enryakuji (the *san shugyōdai*) plainly refused to believe them:

> Nobody in the realm can claim ignorance of the fact that this shrine [of Hie] has been the basis of *ryōbu shūgō* Shinto since the time of Dengyō Daishi [Saichō]. If priests of the shrine maintain that they are too narrow-minded to even know the difference between *yuiitsu* and *shūgō*, they offend the will of the kami. This may have severe consequences for the priests.[21]

From this statement, it is quite obvious that the monks not only accepted the Yoshida term of *ryōbu shūgō*, but also adopted it as the denomination for the doctrine that the Hie Shrine should follow. This is all the more surprising when we realise that alternative terms, such as "*Sannō ichijitsu* Shinto," were readily available at that time.[22] In fact, this latter term did finally appear in an official declaration from 1685:

20 This is documented in a letter mentioned in Gyōjo's diary, entry Kanbun 10 (1670)/1/18 (Satō, 1993, p. 114).

21 Quoted from a report of the *san shugyōdai* to the Kyoto Town Commissioner (*machi-bugyō*), 1684/8; documented in *Shashi ikken* (see Satō, 1993, p. 120).

22 The expression *Sannō ichijitsu* Shinto seems to have been created by the Tendai abbot Tenkai (traditional dates 1536–1643) around 1617. Theologically, this Shinto school can be regarded as a response to Yoshida Shinto based on the traditional *honji suijaku* pattern of the Tendai sect. It was created primarily as an alternative method for the deification of Tokugawa Ieyasu, which would have otherwise occurred according to Yoshida ritual (see Sugahara, 1996; Sonehara, 1996; Boot, 2000). However, *Sannō ichijitsu* Shinto did not

> *Sannō ichijitsu* Shinto arose through the invocation [of Sannō] by Dengyō Daishi, and forms the basis of *ryōbu shūgō* Shinto. However, among the priests of the Hie Shrine a faction of outlaws have planned a new order, [according to which] Buddhist monks and nuns must refrain from entering the shrine, and *yuiitsu* should replace [*ryōbu shūgō*] Shinto.[23]

This quotation shows that while the expression *Sannō ichijitsu* Shinto existed, it still required some explanation, and was not very well known. *Ryōbu shūgō* (in this case shortened to *shūgō*), on the other hand, was used as a general term for the Tendai variety of Shinto without any reservations. Obviously, it was not conceived as a term with distinct Yoshida connotations.

In the course of the proceedings, it emerged that the shrine priests had already tried to obtain certain ritual objects peculiar to Yoshida Shinto, such as the so-called Three Altars.[24] Now, they could no longer pretend to know nothing of "*yuiitsu* Shinto." Pressed by their Buddhist opponents, they indeed began to exhibit an increasing degree of theological sophistication. In defence of their inclination to *yuiitsu* Shinto, they referred to Yoshida Shinto's *Myōbō yōshū*, and maintained that Saichō himself had been introduced to Shinto by ancestors of the Yoshida. This argument is based on a passage from the *Myōbō yōshū*,[25] and proves that the accusation of the Tendai monks was indeed correct. However, since the Enryakuji party themselves used the term *ryōbu shūgō* which is derived from the *Myōbō yōshū*, it may not have been so easy for them to refute the shrine party's arguments.

In the end, the issue was brought to a conclusion when a number of shrine priests overstepped their bounds by removing the main objects of worship (*shintai*) from several Hie shrine buildings. Presumably this was done out of anti-Buddhist fervour, since these *shintai* consisted of kami statues in the guise of Buddhist monks. Yet, this act of fundamentalism offended even the more moderate among the priests themselves. The shrine party split, and the moderates accused the fundamentalists of theft and blasphemy. This charge was taken over by the bakufu and the Buddhist authorities alike, and

become a systematic doctrine until Tenkai's successors drafted works such as *Sannō ichijitsu shintō gen* (by Jitō, dates unknown) or *Ichijitsu shintō ki* (by Jihon, 1795–1869). See *Shintō jiten*, p. 234; Sugahara (1996).

23 Satō (1993), p. 135.

24 Satō (1993), pp. 123 and 125. The Three Altars are comparable in form and also in function to the *goma-dan* of esoteric Buddhism. They are used for the three most prestigious ceremonies of Yoshida Shinto, which are collectively called *Sandan gyōji*, the "Ceremonies of the Three Altars" (see Scheid, 2001, ch. 5).

25 In spite of the fact that Saichō is listed in the above-mentioned definition of *ryōbu shūgō* (see note 5 on p. 207), he and his successors Ennin and Enchin also figure as disciples of Urabe priests in the genealogical table of the Urabe family attached to the *Myōbō yōshū* (NST 19, pp. 242–3).

the shrine priests who were found guilty were punished severely and sent into exile. This judicial decision of 1685 settled the issue in favour of the Buddhist party. As a consequence, the Tendai establishment issued a detailed list of precepts that tied the Hie priests even more tightly to the Buddhist administration than before. Anti-Buddhist resentment remained strong among the priests, however. In 1868, shortly after the new Meiji government had officially proclaimed the separation of Buddhas and kami, Hie priests led by Juge Shigekuni (1822–84) finally destroyed and burned all Buddhist statues, sutras and other Buddhist paraphernalia at the Hie shrines.[26]

The whole case indicates that monks and priests actually had a quite similar understanding of the different kinds of Shinto, even if the priests pretended ignorance for some time. Both were aware of one model involving "two parts," buddhas and kami, and another involving "only one," the kami alone. Whether this last term actually signified Yoshida Shinto is somewhat unclear, according to Satō (1993, p. 137). On the one hand, there are clear signs of Yoshida influence in Hie writings from 1581 and 1601. Satō has also discovered licences relating to priestly garments, issued by the Yoshida for individual Hie priests in 1628 and 1642.[27] On the other hand, it appears that Hie priests were planning to set up a separate system of licences for shrines with some traditional affiliation to Hie. Presumably, they were in the process of adopting Yoshida Shinto for their own purposes, rather than subjecting themselves to the Yoshida priests in Kyoto, and developed their own understanding of *yuiitsu* in this context. In any event, *yuiitsu* signified for both sides an attempt by the Hie priests to emancipate themselves from Enryakuji influence, in defiance of the interests of their Tendai superiors.

Izumo

Shortly before the Hie incident, a similar, but inverted conflict occurred at Izumo Taisha.[28] As is commonly known, the priests of Izumo are among the oldest shrine lineages of Japan. Their head carries a special title, *kokusō* or *kuni no miyatsuko*, indicating a political function in pre-Ritsuryō times that was subsequently transformed into a religious office. In spite of their ancient origin, however, the two traditional sacerdotal lineages of Izumo had come under Buddhist supervision when Izumo Taisha merged with Gakuenji, then the largest temple of Izumo province. Consequently, at the beginning of

26 *Shintō jinmei jiten*, p. 164.

27 On such licences see note 16.

28 This incident is mentioned already by the famous historian of religion Kubota Osamu (1977). The most recent account is an article by Nishioka Kazuhiko (2000), which is based on several diaries of Izumo priests, including Kitajima Tsunenori's *Gozōei nikki*, and a report by the Confucian scholar Kurosawa Sekisai (*Kaikitsudan*). I would like to express my gratitude to Hiromi Maeda, an expert of early modern Yoshida Shinto, for pointing out Nishioka's article to me.

the seventeenth century the shrine compound included a Dainichi Hall, a Buddhist pagoda and all sorts of Buddhist paraphernalia. It seems that the *sengoku daimyō* Amako Tsunehisa (1458–1541) had been particularly active in supplying the shrine with Buddhist donations. In contrast, the main building itself had for centuries existed only in the form of a "provisional hall" (*karidono*), a "temporary replacement" for the proper main building (*honden* or *seiden*) that had been lost in the thirteenth century.

In the middle of the seventeenth century, there was a growing consensus that the *honden* should be restored to its original proportions. This plan had the support of Matsudaira Naomasa (1601–66), who was installed as the *daimyō* of the Matsue domain (to which Izumo Taisha belonged) in 1638. The responsible bakufu officials, the Commissioners of Temples and Shrines (*jisha bugyō*), also seem to have given the idea their backing.[29] It is probably no coincidence that at that time, the policy of the bakufu shifted generally towards a new recognition of Shinto. This is indicated by the fact that the old practice of sending imperial messengers (*heishi*) to Ise was taken up again in 1646. The bakufu supported this practice not only in order to show their reverence for Ise, but also in order to copy it and have imperial messengers sent to Ieyasu's mausoleum in Nikkō.

For the rebuilding of the *honden* in Izumo, support from the bakufu was indispensable. The project was of such dimensions that neither the shrine itself nor the Matsue domain could bear the expenditure alone.[30] Therefore, most costs were taken over by the bakufu, and the restoration of Izumo Taisha became a national project. It is probably due to these circumstances that it took more than twenty years from the inception of the plan to its final realisation in 1667.

Economic reasons were not the only issues at stake, however. As in the case of Hie Taisha, the rebuilding of a shrine required a complicated inauguration ceremony (*sengū shiki*), which had to be clarified in advance. In this case, too, conflicts concerning ritual functions and performances occurred between temple and shrine priests. The first question that needed to be decided was the very name of the deity enshrined. While the *Izumo fudoki*, preserved by the traditional Izumo priests, named Ōnamuchi as the principal deity (the name is also attested in the *Nihon shoki*), a shrine chronicle (*engi*)

29 Among these *jisha bugyō* was Inoue Masatoshi (1606–75), who studied under the famous Shinto-Confucian scholar Yamazaki Ansai in 1658 (Nishioka, 2000, p. 190). One may assume that the influence of Hoshina Masayuki (1611–72), regent of shogun Ietsuna (r. 1651–80) and equally acquainted with Ansai, also helped to make the philo-Shintoistic policies in Izumo possible.

30 To mention only one example of the complicated manoeuvres, described in detail by Nishioka: the gigantic trees necessary for the nine main pillars of the *honden* were eventually found in Tajima province (Hyōgo prefecture), some one hundred kilometres away, and sent by ship to Izumo. For the transport from the seaside to the shrine, a new road had to be cut. Nishioka (2000), p. 210.

kept by Gakuenji mentioned Susanoo. Since both deities are derived from ancient mythology, and are also connected by the fact that Susanoo is an ancestor of Ōnamuchi, this difference may not seem insurmountable. However, these names were probably only emblems, and the real point of contention was whether the inauguration ceremonies should be conducted according to the Buddhist *engi* (which meant combinatory rituals, such as reading sutras to the kami), or according to ancient shrine manuals.

In contrast to many other shrines, the priests of Izumo exhibited a great knowledge of their own tradition. Moreover, they had the support of a Confucian scholar, Kurosawa Sekisai (known also as Hirotada, 1611–78), a disciple of Hayashi Razan, who had been appointed by Matsudaira Naomasa as his "domainal Confucianist" (*hanju*). Like Razan himself, Sekisai opposed all kinds of Buddhist Shinto, and envisaged a combination of Shinto and Confucianism in its stead. Thus, from the very start the possibility to overcome Buddhist integration was much more promising at Izumo than in the case of Hie. So promising, in fact, that apart from the negotiations with the Commissioner for Temples of Shrines, no lawsuit had to be fought out. To the contrary; as the critical mood against Buddhism gained momentum in Izumo, the monks were summarily evicted from the shrine precincts.[31] What began merely as a construction project, culminated in what Nishioka, in line with Kubota Osamu, calls "the first case of a separation of kami and Buddhism (*shinbutsu bunri*) in the history of Japan."[32] Eventually, the affiliation between temple and shrine priests was discontinued, all Buddhist buildings within the shrine precincts were dismantled, and Buddhist treasures were transferred to nearby temples. The climax of this fundamentalistic Shinto policy was an official prohibition against Buddhist buildings closer than six *chō* (*c*. 660 m) to the east and west, and eight *chō* (*c*. 880 m) to the north and south of the shrine. This meant that several smaller temples had to be destroyed.[33]

The most interesting detail in connection with our topic, however, is the fact that the local *shinbutsu bunri* campaign in Izumo was carried out under the motto "Restore *yuiitsu* Shinto" (*yuiitsu shintō saikō*). It is not entirely clear who coined that phrase, but starting from about 1661, it can be found

31 Negotiations with the bakufu started in 1661. At that time it seemed that the Buddhist building inside the shrine precinct would also be renewed. Nishioka (2000), p. 193.

32 As Nishioka (2000, p. 216) indicates, Tsuji Zennosuke (1955) spotted a similar event in 1678 at Sasudahiko Jinja, a shrine in the Wakayama domain ruled by *daimyō* Tokugawa Yorinobu. Kubota Osamu, however, pointed out in 1977 that the case of Izumo was earlier (Kubota 1977). Whether or not this really was the first case of *shinbutsu bunri*, in any event it was not an isolated phenomenon at that time. In 1666, for instance, Tokugawa Mitsukuni, *daimyō* of Mito domain, "embarked upon a program of eliminating 3,088 Buddhist temples and restoring Shinto shrines." Similarly, Hoshina Masayuki and Ikeda Mitsumasa drastically reduced the number of temples in their domains. See Bodart-Bailey (1993), pp. 308–10.

33 Nishioka (2000), p. 205.

in several documents relating to the issue, written both by shrine priests and by bakufu officials. When all decisions were resolved in favour of the shrine priests, one of the leading Izumo priests, Kitajima Tsunenori (also known as Sagusa Jisei), remarked: "From now on people will envy our Great Shrine, rather than Ise, for having realized *yuiitsu*."[34]

What did "*yuiitsu*" mean in this context? Certainly not Yoshida Shinto, since there is no trace of any intervention of Yoshida priests at Izumo. Rather, it meant rituals according to traditional, pre-Buddhist practice, and also iconographic and architectural independence, as indicated by the fact that the new shrine buildings were in unpainted wood, rather than vermilion red. *Yuiitsu* Shinto was interpreted quite literally in the sense of "kami tradition only." In due consequence, we also encounter the term *ryōbu* in contemporary texts relating to the restoration of Izumo. For instance, in a biographical sketch of *daimyō* Matsudaira Naomasa we read: "He was interested in the teachings of Japan and China and held the kami in great respect. Naomasa put all his efforts into replacing *ryōbu* and reviving the customs of old at Kizuki (= Izumo) Taisha."[35] Once again, we encounter the opposition of *ryōbu*, signifying Buddhist Shinto, versus *yuiitsu* Shinto, which is simply taken to refer to the unaltered, original customs of ancient times.

Ise

Finally, I shall briefly mention a case from the Ise shrines at about the same time, which has been described in detail by Mark Teeuwen (1996, pp. 282–9). In 1670–1, the notorious conflict between the Inner and Outer Shrine of Ise that had marred the history of the shrines for centuries broke out again. To be precise, proselytisers (*onshi*) of Uji, a town affiliated with the Inner Shrine of Ise, and Yamada, affiliated with the Outer Shrine, competed over the right to collect alms in the name of the Ise shrines. The crux of the matter was the question whether the Outer Shrine and its deity Toyouke carried the same imperial prestige as the Inner Shrine and Amaterasu. This had far-reaching consequences for fundraising and the organisation of pilgrimages, which were already well developed at that time. The case of 1670–1 was only one in a series of disputes that had to be decided by bakufu officials, ranging from the Yamada *bugyō* (the representative of the bakufu at Ise) to the supreme court of the bakufu (*hyōjōsho*) in Edo.

Even though the *onshi* did not consider their arguments in terms of *ryōbu* and *yuiitsu*, the Yamada *bugyō*, who was not necessarily an expert in theological questions, did. In his attempt to simplify the complex matter, he "tried to force the parties to confess to either Yuiitsu or Ryōbu Shintō," as Teeuwen writes.[36] In the end, however, he had to accept "that this was not a matter

34 Ibid., p. 206.

35 From *Tokugawa shoke keifu* 4, cited in Nishioka (2000), p. 189.

36 Teeuwen (1996), pp. 286–7.

that could be decided by *onshi*." It is not entirely clear from the context what the Yamada *bugyō* was aiming at, but obviously he did not use the term *yuiitsu* in the strict sense of "Yoshida Shinto," since Yoshida Shinto had no direct influence either on the Outer or the Inner Shrine. Rather, he may have been aware of the situation in Izumo that had just been decided in favour of *yuiitsu*. In any event, this incident provides us with yet another example showing that the pattern of *ryōbu* versus *yuiitsu* shaped the general understanding of the relationship between Buddhism and Shinto in the middle of the seventeenth century, particularly at a less specialist level of discourse.

Examples from doctrinal writings

Finally, I shall touch briefly on a few doctrinal and/or historical writings from the early Edo period. It is in this genre that the Yoshida distinction between three types of Shinto left its mark most clearly. Intellectuals of the Edo period such as Hayashi Razan, Yamazaki Ansai, or, much later, Hirata Atsutane, as well as "Buddhist Shintoists" such as the Tendai abbot Tenkai, even if they were critical of Yoshida Shinto itself, all took over this typology of Shinto, only to add their own brand of Shinto as its highest and ultimate form. Moreover, the Yoshida classification still has an impact on modern Shinto historiography, in the form of the term "Ryōbu Shinto."

Let me take Hayashi Razan (1583–1657) as just one example of the way in which early modern intellectuals understood the Yoshida typology of Shinto. Experts of Tokugawa Confucianism have shown that Razan's most prominent Shinto writing, the *Shinto denju*, is closely related to Kanetomo's *Myōbō yōshū*.[37] Here Razan refers to the three categories of Shinto, for which he uses the same terminology as Kanetomo, but with slightly different definitions. Under the header "The three lineages of Shinto" (*shintō sanryū*), Razan declares:

> *Yuiitsu sōgen*: This is the Shinto of the Divine Age, the old style of Japan, not mixed with foreign things. It was founded by Kasuga Myōjin [Ame no Koyane], split between the Nakatomi and the Urabe after the Taishokkan [Fujiwara no Kamatari], and is now the [Shinto] lineage of the Yoshida and the Hirano.
>
> *Ryōbu shūgō*: This is the unity (*ittai*) of buddhas and kami, Amaterasu Ōmikami being Dainichi Nyorai. [The deity of] Hie

37 Klaus Kracht (1986, pp. 118–21) even regards both texts as conceptually congruent: "Es erscheint . . . nicht abwegig, Razans Text seiner Konzeption entsprechend als eine Art '*Yuiitsu shintō myōbō yōshū* des 17. Jahrhunderts' anzusehen" (ibid., p. 120). The impact of Yoshida Shinto on Razan is partly due to Razan's early contacts with the Shinto of the Kiyowara family. Since a son of Yoshida Kanetomo, Nobukata, became the adopted heir of the Kiyowara, this traditional house of Confucian scholarship also incorporated Yoshida Shinto texts into its teachings (Imanaka, 1972, p. 291).

> [Shrine] is said to be Yakushi. This lineage goes back to Gyōki, Dengyō and Kōbō.
>
> *Honjaku engi*: This has been transmitted by *kannushi* lineages in the provinces for a long time. [This lineage] invented *honji suijaku* and maintains [things such as:] this shrine has a kami from Japan, and that shrine has a kami who flew to this place from China or India.[38]

It is interesting to note that in spite of his frequent critical remarks on the "explanations of the Urabe," Razan holds *yuiitsu sōgen* Shinto in comparatively high esteem, accepting most of Kanetomo's historical pretensions as given facts. In his definition of *ryōbu shūgō*, we encounter the unity of Amaterasu and Dainichi, but the specific stress on the duality of Ise and the two realms of Dainichi has been lost. Instead, Razan somewhat hesitatingly includes also Hie in this category. He adds Gyōki,[39] but drops the representatives of Tendai esotericism, Ennin and Enchin. Finally, he regards *honjaku engi* as the general pattern of lesser shrines in the provinces, and attributes the creation of the *honji suijaku* pattern explicitly to them. With a critical undertone, he mentions that these shrines draw no distinction between foreign and indigenous kami.

The implicit hierarchical ranking in Razan's typology is taken over from the *Myōbō yōshū*, but is expressed even more clearly. The status of each type of Shinto is related to the status of its founder. For Razan, the founder becomes the central criterion that differentiates between the forms of Shinto. Therefore, it is of utmost importance whether the association of a buddha with a kami is based on the writings of a famous monk, or on an anonymous text, when one has to decide into which category to put it. In the *Myōbō yōshū*, the difference between *ryōbu shūgō* and *honjaku engi* seems to be determined by esoteric or exoteric Buddhist affiliation. For Razan, however,

38 *Shintō denju*, NST 39, p. 18. Razan places this definition immediately before his own *ritō shinchi* Shinto, and goes on to call the whole treatise "the secret of Shinto's deepest meaning" (*Shintō ōgi no hi*; NST 39, p. 57). It becomes clear that this *ritō shinchi* Shinto even surpasses *yuiitsu*. When he was commissioned to write the *Shintō denju* between 1644 and 1648 by Sakai Tadakatsu, he produced a first draft in the form of several separate *kirigami*, individual sheets folded in a distinct way that was adopted from esoteric Buddhism to indicate secret texts. This testifies to his intention of building up his own religious tradition beyond the traditional three kinds of Shinto, much in the same way as was later done with more success by Yamazaki Ansai in the form of his Suika Shinto (Taira, 1972, pp. 518–19). The technique of proselytising Shinto through *kirigami* was taken over from medieval traditions like Watarai and Yoshida Shinto.

39 This is probably due to the fact that Gyōki figured as the author of *Yamato Katsuragi hōzan ki* ("Record of the Treasure Mountain Katsuragi in Yamato"), an apocryphal text from the Kamakura period with strong indications of Shugendō influence, that is nowadays classified as a Ryōbu Shinto text (*Shintō jiten*, p. 589). Razan obviously included Shugendō in the category of *ryōbu*.

this differentiation of "Buddhist Shinto" into exoteric and esoteric categories seems to have lost its importance.[40] Thus, the difference between *ryōbu shūgō* and *honjaku engi* tends to become obscure. Razan's definition is therefore a kind of intermediate link between the original definition of the *Myōbō yōshū*, and later doctrinal writings such as the *Shingō ruiyō* mentioned at the beginning of this chapter.

Even so, Razan's typology is certainly closer to the *Myōbō yōshū* original than, for instance, Kaempfer's views on Shinto. However, it is probable that the dualistic usage of *ryōbu* versus *yuiitsu* existed already in his time. From the diary of Bonshun (1553–1632), a member of the Yoshida family who in spite of his training as a Buddhist monk became the leading proponent of Yoshida Shinto between 1610 and 1632, we learn that he was summoned by Tokugawa Ieyasu in 1613, and asked (among other things) about the difference between *ryōbu* and *yuiitsu*.[41] About one hundred years later, Masuho Zankō (1655–1742), a popular Shinto writer with close ties to the Yoshida, almost seems to mirror Kaempfer's view when he writes lamentingly: "Many lowly priests (*geki*) found their way only to *ryōbu*, and disregarded *yuiitsu sōgen*. Therefore the shrines slowly turned into temples."[42] The Shingon monk Keichū (1640–1701), a critic of the Yoshida and a forerunner of Kokugaku, commented on the Watarai classic *Yamato-hime no mikoto seiki* that it "must have been fabricated in order to fraudulently set up *yuiitsu*."[43] These remarks reflect the loose understanding of *yuiitsu* and *ryōbu* that we already encountered in the examples taken from shrine disputes, and eventually found criticised in the *Shingyō ruiyō*. They may suffice to underline my impression that the paradigm of "two parts" versus "one only" had become a standard framework of Shinto in the Edo period. It may reflect a rather popular understanding but was adopted even by specialists, as is attested in Shinto writings both inside and outside of Yoshida Shinto.

Conclusion

In the early Edo period, the Yoshida typology of Shinto found wide acceptance beyond the boundaries of Yoshida Shinto, but at the same time became

40 Admittedly, in his *Zuihitsu* Razan used a definition of *ryōbu shūgō* which seems to stress the esoteric character of this form of Shinto: "*Ryōbu shūgō* Shinto: Some outstanding texts/disciples (*myōmon*) of Saichō and Kūkai took the two realms of Taizōkai and Kongōkai, united them with Yin and Yang, and thus put buddhas and kami together (*ittai*) into one *honji*." (Quoted from Imanaka, 1972, p. 288.) Still, it is my impression that Razan was in the first place looking for a criterion to distinguish "vulgar" Buddhist Shinto (= *honjaku engi*) from "high-status" Buddhist Shinto (= *ryōbu shūgō*). In doing so, he refrained from mentioning Ise as the point of reference of *ryōbu shūgō*, as in the *Myōbō yōshū*.

41 Hagiwara (1975), p. 687.

42 *Kamiji no tebikigusa* ("A handguide to the path of the kami"), NST 39, p. 206.

43 *Keichū zakkō* 10, quoted in Teeuwen (1996), pp. 296–7.

the subject of new interpretations, which forced the Yoshida to redefine their views. The quotation from *Shingyō ruiyō* with which I began this chapter is one example of this. In this period, *yuiitsu* was both a designation for Yoshida Shinto proper – that is, the religious system administered by the Yoshida priestly family – and for "Yoshida-like" forms of Shinto, that may have taken the former as a model, but aimed to establish themselves independently. *Ryōbu*, on the other hand, gradually lost its original esoteric connotations, and simply came to signify Buddhist Shinto, regardless of whether it was based on the classical *honji suijaku* pattern, or on subtle esoteric conceptions. The category of *honjaku engi*, however, was rarely ever used. This seems to be due to the fact that in the original definition, it represented the lowest form of Shinto.

From this evidence we can infer that Yoshida Kanetomo's Shinto typology achieved two things. It established "Shinto" as a category of religious discourse along with Buddhism (*butsudō*) and Confucianism (*judō*). And it split this new form of discourse into two types: one influenced by Buddhism – a syncretistic discourse, so to speak – and one free from Buddhist influence – at least on the level of iconography and religious administration. As mentioned above, this opposition was not intended by Yoshida Kanetomo. However, it was what most closely resembled the actual situation in the early Edo period. When Yoshida Shinto propagated its idea of a pure Shinto on a popular level, it posed a threat to traditional institutions such as the Tendai school, who applied what we now call the *honji suijaku* paradigm in their religious practice of kami worship. Probably for the first time, these institutions were forced to explain this practice in an abstract way. Lacking a standardised terminology of their own, they submitted themselves to the doctrinal arsenal of their challengers – that is, more or less, to Kanetomo's *Myōbō yōshū*.[44] The first consequence of this development was the acceptance of the term "Shinto" as a general designation for everything that has to do with shrines and kami. Second, another term from Kanetomo was adopted to refer to *honji suijaku* practice. Here, the category of *ryōbu shūgō*, rather than Kanetomo's *honjaku engi* Shinto (which would have been more appropriate in cases such as the Hie shrine), became a comprehensive label for "Buddhist Shinto."

In this way, the contradistinction between *ryōbu* and *yuiitsu* structured the world of kami worship in the first half of the Edo period, just as Kaempfer described it. Although this paradigm hints at the influence of Yoshida Shinto's *Myōbō yōshū*, it is at the same time also an indication of its limitations. As in many other cases, Yoshida Shinto could not make full use of its own innovations, and served rather as a catalyst for developments that in the last instance overtook their initiator.

44 For a similar occurrence, see also the chapter by Lucia Dolce in this volume.

9

HOKKE SHINTO

Kami in the Nichiren tradition

Lucia Dolce

Hokke Shinto is a term that designates kami interpretations and kami practices elaborated towards the end of the medieval period by the Hokke school, the name by which the Nichiren tradition was known until the Meiji period. This form of *honji suijaku* doctrine has received little attention among scholars of Japanese religion, perhaps because it developed later than other associative systems such as Ryōbu Shinto or Sannō Shinto, and because it was produced by a school of the so-called "new Kamakura Buddhism," which post-war analyses of Japanese religious history have deemed free of the ideology on which *honji suijaku* systems are based.

Hokke Shinto was the result of a process of expansion of the Hokke communities in the Kyoto area, and of the relations that these communities tried to establish with the shrines of the capital. The main focus of Hokke Shinto was a set of thirty kami (or shrines), known as *sanjūbanjin*, or "thirty protecting deities," because each of them guarded one of the thirty days of the month (Figure 9.1). Before being adopted by the Hokke school, these kami were already worshiped in the Tendai community on Mount Hiei. However, it was the interest that the emerging shrine lineage of the Yoshida showed in the *sanjūbanjin* that set the context in which the Hokke school developed a comprehensive discourse on the kami.

In this chapter I first trace the development of the worship of the *sanjūbanjin*, focusing on the importance that the exchanges with the Yoshida house had for the formulation of the meaning of these kami. Hokke Shinto also addressed questions related to other kami and to other elements of the world of kami, and I discuss some of the interpretations that appear in Hokke writings. Finally, I briefly look at the ritual aspects of the cult of the *sanjūbanjin*. I have reconstructed the Hokke discourse on the kami from a variety of sources: unpublished manuscripts of doctrinal treatises, historical documents of the various lineages of the school, and iconographic material.

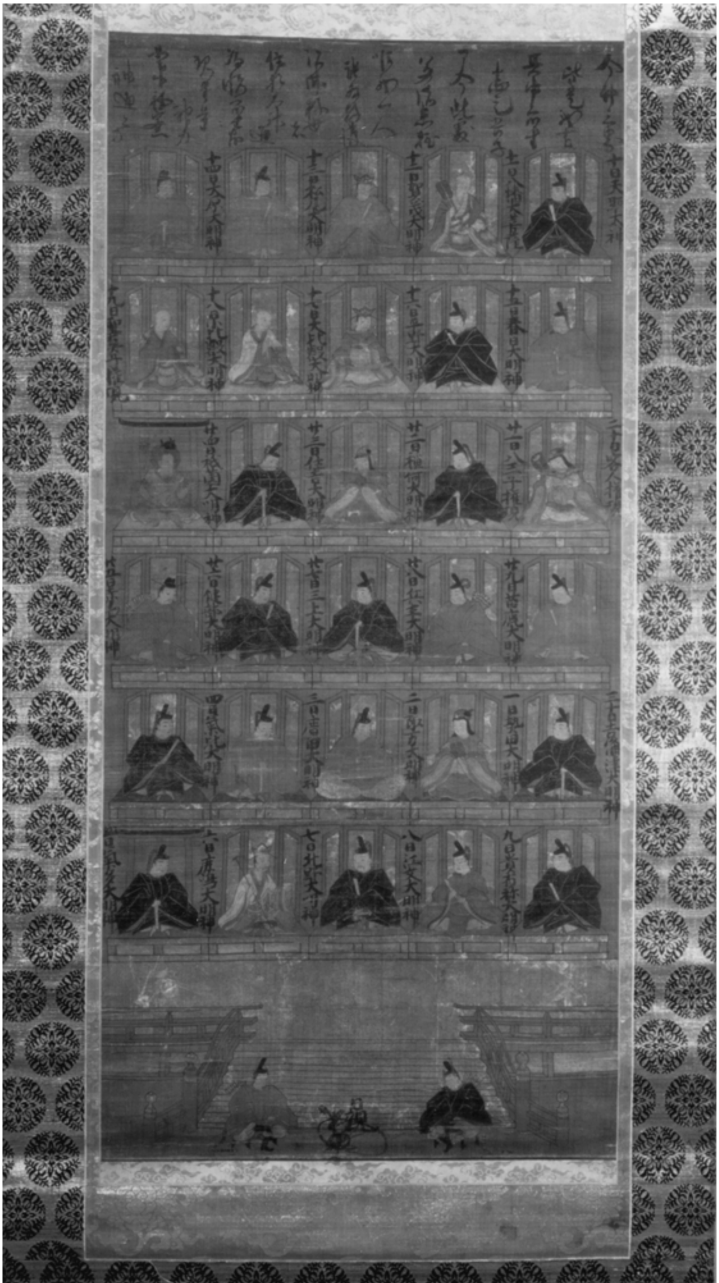
Sanjūbanjin

1	Atsuta	16	Hirano
2	Suwa	17	Ōbie
3	Hirota	18	Obie
4	Kehi	19	Shōshinji
5	Keta	20	Marōdo (Hakusan)
6	Kashima	21	Hachiōji
7	Kitano	22	Inari
8	Ebumi	23	Sumiyoshi
9	Kifune	24	Gion
10	Amaterasu (Ise)	25	Sekisan
11	Hachiman (Iwashimizu)	26	Takebe
12	Kamo	27	Mikami
13	Matsu(no)o	28	Hyōzu
14	Ōharano	29	Naeka
15	Kasuga	30	Kibi

The sources used, however, are only the tip of the iceberg of a vast Hokke literature on the way of the kami, which still awaits to be edited, published, and further studied.

The *sanjūbanjin*: one kami for each day to protect Buddhism and Japan

Standard references works on Japanese Buddhism or Shinto list several types of *sanjūbanjin*, according to the object of their protection.[1] These taxonomies look quite arbitrary because they overlap or cross each other, and this often makes it difficult to understand what kind of deities the *sanjūbanjin* were. In general terms, one may say that the thirty kami belonged to the category of "good gods" (*zenjin*), deities that were thought to protect Japan, its rulers, and Buddhism in the *mappō* period – in this capacity they are, for instance, mentioned in literary works of the early medieval period such as *Hōgen monogatari*.[2] More specifically, one may distinguish between two groups of *sanjūbanjin*: those related to the physical and political world of Japan, such



as the kami who protected "Heaven and Earth" (i.e. the eight directions) and the kami who protected the imperial palace or the hall where the sacred mirror was kept; and those related to religious practices, such as the kami who protected the *Lotus Sutra* and its liturgies and other Buddhist scriptures. It is this second group that seems to have been the original set of *sanjūbanjin*.

Tendai rituals and the sanjūbanjin

A set of thirty kami is first mentioned in relation to a specific ritual developed in the Tendai school: the practice of "copying the *Lotus Sutra* according to the prescribed method" (*nyohōkyō*). This copying involved a series of procedures focusing on the purity of the body and the material used to copy the scripture; devotion to the sutra was expressed by bowing three times for each character one copied. Preparations occupied most of the time spent on the ritual, subsidiary scriptures were also recited and copied, and the main sutra, the *Lotus Sutra*, was copied at the end, on an auspicious day.[3] The practice was started by Ennin (792–862) and was later associated, in particular, with the Yokawa area of Mount Hiei. It is said that the *sanjūbanjin* manifested themselves to Ennin while he was performing this ritual, and thus became the tutelary deities of the practice. Records, however, indicate that Ennin venerated only twelve kami, associated to the twelve signs of the hours of the day (*nijūshi*), and that the *sanjūbanjin* were systematised and identified each with one day of the month only in the eleventh century.[4] Small shrines dedicated to these kami were built in Yokawa, and statues of the thirty gods were placed in these shrines and in buildings surrounding the

1 Cf. MBDJ 2, pp. 1560–6, which also contains a detailed description of the thirty gods. Secondary sources speak of ten types of *sanjūbanjin*. For a chart of correspondences between the various types see Miyazaki (1958), pp. 79–82. According to Miyazaki, Shinto lineages used only four, those related to the protection of the directions, of the *naishidokoro*, of the capital, and of the country; the type of *sanjūbanjin* protectors of the imperial palace, on the contrary, was used in Ryōbu Shinto and other *honji suijaku* circles.

2 Miyazaki (1958), p. 80, MBDJ 2, p. 1560.

3 For a description of this practice, see for instance Kageyama (1978), pp. 85–96 and, in English, Tanabe (1988), pp. 44–5.

4 Kageyama (1978), pp. 92–3. The list of the twelve kami venerated by Ennin starts with Amaterasu and Hachiman. The systematization of the *sanjūbanjin* is attributed to the *ajari* Ryōshō of the Ryōgon'in in 1073.

Figure 9.1 (facing page) Painting of the *sanjūbanjin*, from the Muromachi period, kept at Honpōji, Kyoto (colour on silk, 84.3 × 38.8 cm). It has been attributed to a master of the Tosa school. The names of the kami and the inscription at the top of the painting, which consists of sentences from three chapters of the *Lotus Sutra*, were written by Kuonjōin Nisshin (1406–88). Nisshin's *kaō* is found at the bottom of the icon.

main hall.[5] The worship of the *sanjūbanjin* continued in the Tendai school throughout the Heian and medieval periods, and also spread out from Mount Hiei to other sites where ritual copying of the *Lotus Sutra* took place. A medieval collection of rituals, the *Mon'yōki*, describes a number of assemblies for the performance of this practice (*nyohōkyō no hōe*). The liturgical prescriptions include displaying a piece of paper with the names of the *sanjūbanjin* (*jinmyōchō*); in one case this register is hung from the horizontal timber of the wall in front of the entrance to the practice hall, either the eastern wall or the northern wall, in other cases, the paper is stamped on the wall.[6] Lists of the thirty kami are supplied, and the practitioners are also instructed to write down the names of the *sanjūbanjin*, to concentrate on the kami of that day and to read one fascicle of the sutra "to make the kami rejoice in the Dharma" (*hōraku*).

What was the origin of this fixed set of tutelary deities, and how did they become thirty? To have a fixed number of deities was not uncommon in Buddhism. The *Guanding jing*, for instance, mentions thirty-six "good gods" who protect men and women who rely on the Three Treasures.[7] There also existed examples of *banjin*, that is, deities assembled in a certain order and allocated to specific slots of time. In China in the tenth century thirty "secret buddhas" (*mi-fo*) were thought to protect the days of the month, and this belief spread to Japan in the medieval period, where the thirty deities were also known as "the buddha-names of the thirty days [of the month]" (*sanjūnichi butsumyō*).[8] The Tendai school also used distinctive sets: "the five kami protecting Mt. Hiei," Ōbie, Obie (Ninomiya), Shōshinji, Marōdo (Hakusan) and Hachiōji, were venerated each for six days, in this order; four of these, together with Mikami, Ebumi, Naeka, Amaterasu, Hachiman, Gion, Kitano, and Hirano, formed the "twelve tutelary deities of Hiei," who were said to protect the devotee of the *Lotus Sutra* during the twelve hours of the day. These sets may be regarded as prototypes for the *sanjūbanjin*.[9]

It is also necessary to consider what kami came to be part of the set related to the ritual copying of the sutra. Although the practice with which the

5 Kageyama (1978), pp. 94 and 96. Kageyama notes that some of the original statues were preserved until the great fire of 1942 that destroyed the main hall of Yokawa.

6 *Mon'yōki*, sections on *nyohōkyō*, T. Zuzō 11 pp. 626–721, in particular p. 681 (ritual held at a residence in Sanjō on Bun'ei 9 (1272)/8/15) and p. 664 (ritual held at a residence in Sanjō on Kōchō 1 (1261)/5/8). The section also includes diagrammes of the practice hall. See also Fukuda (1982) pp. 97–100. *Mon'yōki* was compiled by Prince Son'en (1298–1356).

7 NJ, p. 79.

8 MBDJ 2, p. 1560. The set included popular buddhas, bodhisattvas and heavenly deities.

9 Saichō, who established Mount Hiei as the centre of the future Tendai school, is said to have invited the kami of the various regions of Japan and solicited them to protect him and Mount Hiei. A work attributed to him gives the names of Ōbie, Obie, Kamo, Sumiyoshi, Kibi, and Kita. (*Chōkō ninnō hannya eshiki*, T. 74 p. 261.) According to some scholars these may be regarded as the original group of kami which would later become the *sanjūbanjin*.

sanjūbanjin were associated was a devotional liturgy of the *Lotus Sutra*, the deities chosen to protect it were not the heavenly gods who, in the scripture itself, have the task of protecting the sutra and its practitioners, but thirty among the most powerful shrines of Japan. When one compares the names of the *sanjūbanjin* with other groups of shrines that were important in the Heian period, one characteristic immediately emerges: with a few substitutions, the *sanjūbanjin* include the twenty-two shrines that had received imperial support (*nijūnisha*) since the late Heian period, and that were political symbols of the relation between religion and state.[10] Thus, the great majority of the *sanjūbanjin* were shrines of the Kinai area, including the major shrines of Mount Hiei. They did not represent the kami of the entire country of Japan, nor kami worshiped in the provinces, but epitomized the interests of a group of learned monks and their relation with the court. It is with these characteristics that the *sanjūbanjin* were adopted into the Hokke school.

Kami from the sanjūbanjin *set in the early Hokke school*

The cult of the *sanjūbanjin* in Hokke communities started at the beginning of the fourteenth century, and there is no trace of this set of deities in the writings of the founder of the school, Nichiren (1222–82). However, Nichiren had venerated the kami of Japan, and had inscribed two of them, Amaterasu and Hachiman (who would later be included in the set of thirty kami), in the calligraphic mandalas that he drew as *honzon* of his Buddhism. Nichiren called these two kami "the original lords (*honshu*) of our country,"[11] and regarded them as protectors of the land. Nichiren's writings also mention "the three thousand and more shrines of Japan, Amaterasu first, Hachiman second and the Sannō kami third, who day and night protect our country and its rulers (*kokka*)."[12] It should be noted that, from a doctrinal point of view, Nichiren's interpretation of Amaterasu and Hachiman differed from popular associative theories that regarded Kannon or Dainichi as the *honji* of Amaterasu, and Amida as the *honji* of Hachiman. For Nichiren, the Buddha of the *Lotus Sutra*, Śākyamuni, was the original source of both Amaterasu and Hachiman, insofar as he was the ever-existing Buddha, foundation of all other buddhas and deities.[13] This variant of the *honji suijaku* pattern would be maintained in later Hokke interpretations of the *sanjūbanjin.*

10 On the system of twenty-two shrines, see Grapard (1984).

11 *Zenmui sanzōshō*, *Teihon* 1, p. 46. On Nichiren's ideas on the kami see Ueda (1967) and Sasaki (1973). On the medieval representation of Amaterasu as the "lord of the country of Japan" and Nichiren's interpretation of this, see Satō (1999), pp. 129–37.

12 *Shinkokuō gosho*, *Teihon* 1, p. 882.

13 See, for instance, *Nichigennyo shakabutsu kuyōji, Teihon* 2, p. 1623.

Although Nichiren never mentioned the thirty kami, legends were later created to suggest that these deities had been part of the pantheon of the Hokke school since the time of its founder. One that can be found in early biographies of Nichiren recounts that the *sanjūbanjin* appeared to Nichiren while he was reading the *Lotus Sutra* in the temple were he lived during his years of study on Mount Hiei. According to these sources, Nichiren wrote down the names of the deities and drew their images; these inscriptions are said to be the *jinmyōchō* (kami register) kept at Myōkaiji in Numazu, and the pictorial representation preserved at Risshōji in Yamanashi.[14] The story clearly is a later fabrication of sectarian hagiographers who wanted to trace back a current practice to the founder, but it was influential in reinforcing the worship of the *sanjūbanjin* within the Hokke school.

The development of a cult of the thirty deities may be more properly linked to the youngest disciple of Nichiren, Nichizō (1269–1342), who went to spread the teachings of Nichiren in the area of the capital. Evidence of his interest in the *sanjūbanjin* comes from the mandalas that Nichizō drew. Among the more than eighty holographic icons which have been preserved, ten include the logographs of some of the *banjin*, inscribed in the lower section of the icon at both sides of the *daimoku*, following the logographs of Amaterasu and Hachiman.[15] In one such mandala we find Amaterasu, Kibi, Sekisan, and Shōshinji on one side, and Hachiman, Matsuo, Marōdo, and Hachiōji on the other side.[16] In another, Amaterasu, Kamo, Hiei, and Hachiōji are on the right side; and Hachiman, Kasuga, Gion, and Sumiyoshi on the left side.[17] Thus at this point the set does not seem to have been used in its entirety. One may also note the predominance of the tutelary gods of Mount Hiei, which points to the popularity that these deities must have enjoyed in the Kyoto area, and at the same time suggests Nichizō's intention to maintain a close relation with the Tendai school, which had its headquarters there.

There is no doubt that the rationale for Nichizō's promotion of the *sanjūbanjin* is to be found in his strategy of expansion in the capital, where the worship of these kami was especially strong among clerics and residents. One may suggest that several religio-political factors contributed to the adoption of the thirty gods. First, the fact that this set of kami was already related to practices of the *Lotus Sutra* may have helped presenting the Hokke

14 *Honge betsuzu kōsoden* and *Honge betsuzu busso tōki*, cited in Miyagawa (1986), pp. 264–5. The date given for this episode is 1249. A board with the pictures of the *sanjūbanjin* at the entrance of Teikōji, the temple built on the site where Nichiren is supposed to have lived, commemorates the episode.

15 Eighty-three mandalas drawn by Nichizō were published for his 606th anniversary, including ten mandalas which inscribe *sanjūbanjin*. Miyagawa (1986), pp. 265–6.

16 Dated Gentoku 2 (1330)/9/13. Kept at Yakuōji, Osaka. *Zenshi*, p. 287 and Sonoda (1966c), p. 181.

17 Dated Kenmu 3 (1336)/11/13. Kept at Honryūji, Kyoto. Sonoda (1966c), p. 181.

school as a continuation of existent religious establishments. Second, the adoption of the worship of important shrines made it easier for the new Hokke community to gain the support of the court and the nobility, and for Nichizō to establish his temple as a site for imperial prayers (*chokugansho*). Finally, on a sectarian level, by supporting the worship of the *sanjūbanjin* Nichizō tried to counterbalance one trend within the emerging Nichiren communities, which, as we shall see, disallowed the worship of kami.

The worship of the *sanjūbanjin* must have spread very quickly among the various Hokke lineages between the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. Documents of Hokke temples in the Kanto area attest that calligraphic mandalas produced in the Nakayama lineage in Chiba also began to include the thirty kami at this time,[18] and about ten years after Nichizō's death the first "hall for the worship of the *sanjūbanjin*" (*banjindō*) was built at the Hiraga Hondoji.[19] The oldest existing example of a complete representation of the thirty kami is a painting consecrated by Kuonjōin Nisshin (1407–88).[20]

The Yoshida–Hokke debate on the *sanjūbanjin*

It was in the late fifteenth century that the *sanjūbanjin* came to the attention of the Yoshida shrine lineage and were at the centre of a debate between Yoshida Kanetomo (1435–1511) and the Hokke school.[21] A document known as *Banjin mondōki* attests to Kanetomo's interest in the *sanjūbanjin*, and to the claims that he made on these deities. This document reproduces part of the correspondence between the two lineages: a letter of enquiry that Kanetomo sent to three major Hokke temples in Kyoto; a reply from one of these temples; a rejoinder from Kanetomo, and a tale designated as the "Records of Kanemasu" (*Kanemasu ki*).[22] Other material related to these exchanges is included in collections of historical documents of the Hokke school, such as the *Ryūge hishō*.[23]

This debate on the *sanjūbanjin* represents the first attempt for Hokke monks to formulate a consistent theory of kami, and testifies to the role that interaction with the Yoshida shrine lineage played in the construction of Hokke Shinto. The issues addressed in response to Kanetomo remained

18 Nichiyū, third *kanshu* of the Nakayama Hokkekyōji, in his *Honzon shōgyō roku* written in 1343, listed calligraphic mandalas where the logographs of the *sanjūbanjin* had been inscribed, with pictorial representations.

19 *Zenshi*, p. 287.

20 Kept at Myōmanji. The painting includes the *kaō* of Nisshin. Hirono (1924), p. 5.

21 On Kanetomo see Grapard (1992b) and Scheid (2001).

22 *Banjin mondōki*, printed edition dated Jōō 2 (1653), library of Kyoto University. I am indebted to Prof. W. J. Boot for obtaining a copy of this manuscript, and of the *Hokke shintō hiketsu* which is discussed below.

23 NSZ 19, pp. 87–9, 101, 125, and 146–50.

central in later literature on the kami produced by the Hokke school. It is thus relevant to reconstruct the debate and examine the positions of its players in some detail.

Kanetomo's questions

On 1497/2/9, Kanetomo sent a short letter to Myōrenji, Myōhonji, and Honkokuji, addressing it to "the lineages of the disciples of the Master of [*Risshō*] *Ankokuron*."[24] Kanetomo inquired about the type of *sanjūbanjin* that were venerated in the temples of the Hokke school, asking whether they were the same kami that had manifested themselves at Yokawa while the ritual copying of the *Lotus Sutra* was performed, or whether they were the thirty-two kami who had accompanied the descent of the Heavenly Grandchild and were worshipped by the Yoshida priests. Kanetomo suggested that the *sanjūbanjin* of the Hokke school could not have been adopted from the Tendai rituals, because this would have been against the intentions of the founder of the school, Nichiren, who had received the transmission of the secret names of the thirty-two gods venerated by the Yoshida from an ancestor of Kanetomo, Kanemasu.[25] The occasion of this transmission is narrated more comprehensively in the tale which concludes the *Banjin mondōki*. According to this, the "practitioner of the Lotus" Nichiren visited Kanemasu on 1261/9/2, and was granted the secret transmission on the grounds that he was a man of uncommon talent and scholarship who had mastered the entire canon.[26]

This *Kanemasu ki* is presented as a document from the Kamakura period, but scholars consider it to be an apocryphon fabricated probably by Kanetomo to claim the authority of the Yoshida lineage over the worship of the *sanjūbanjin* by tracing its origins back to events that had taken place more than two centuries before.[27] The story was in fact to become extremely popular, and would not only be quoted in other works by Kanetomo such as *Shintō taii* and *Jingi shōshū*, but also in other writings of the Yoshida lineage, such as Kiyowara Nobukata's *Nihon shoki shō*.[28] Kanetomo even maintained

24 *Banjin mondōki* 2*v*. *Risshō ankokuron* is one of Nichiren's early writings. Myōhonji was the name temporarily given to Myōkenji, the powerful temple founded by Nichizō, which was also supported by the bakufu. NJ, pp. 725–6.

25 *Banjin mondōki* 1–1*v*. The thirty-two kami would later be known as the "thirty kami who protect the imperial palace" (*dairi sanjūbanjin*).

26 *Banjin mondōki*, pp. 22–2v.

27 The historian Miura Hiroyuki has conclusively argued that the document is not from the Kamakura period. He has also pointed out that at the moment in which his encounter with Nichiren allegedly occurred, Kanemasu would have been too young to bestow any secret transmission on the Buddhist monk: Miura (1912), pp. 5–6, 9. However, Miura also doubts whether the *Kanemasu ki* was actually written by Kanetomo, and suggests that it might be an even later fabrication: ibid., p. 22.

28 Quoted in Sonoda (1966c), pp. 180–1 and in Miura (1912), pp. 3–4.

that the *sanjūbanjin* of the Hokke school were not a set of deities existing since Ennin's time. In a section devoted to the origin of these deities, which he appended to one of his *Shintō taii*, Kanetomo pointed out that two of the shrines which had been included in the set, Gion and Kitano, were first worshiped only after Ennin's death.[29]

It is difficult to gain a clear understanding of the background to this debate. It is possible that Kanetomo had arbitrarily identified the thirty kami with the thirty-two kami protectors of the imperial palace he venerated, and by so doing had incurred complaints from the Hokke school.[30] Another fragment of his correspondence with the Hokke temples suggests that Kanetomo may have had a practical reason. He seems to have been ordered by the court to compile a follow-up of the name register of deities (*zoku jinmyōchō*) and, with the intention of also including the *sanjūbanjin* venerated by the Hokke school, he inquired whether they were deities venerated on Mount Hiei or deities properly venerated in "Shinto."[31] However, a closer reading of the correspondence indicates that Kanetomo's concern with the origin of the kami venerated in the Hokke temples went hand in hand with his attempt to establish the monopoly of his lineage on kami worship. The controversy on the *sanjūbanjin* should thus be seen in the context of the strategies that Kanetomo adopted to establish his Shinto as the only type of religion suitable for the country of Japan. In the first enquiry that he sent to the three Hokke temples, Kanetomo clearly asserted his understanding of the meaning of kami:

> [This] country is a divine country; its lord is a divine ruler. From the first person at the top to the common people at the bottom, clerics and laymen, men and women, all are descendants of the gods (*shinmei*) . . . The *Shinkyō* says: "If there were no kami in heaven, neither the three lights [i.e. the sun, the moon, and the stars], nor the four seasons would exist. If there were no kami on earth, neither the five phases (*gogyō*), nor the myriad phenomena (*manmotsu*) would exist. If there were no kami in men, there would be no life nor existence (*manbō*)." . . . The power that comes from performing a myriad practices is nothing but the way of our kami (*shintō*). If this [Hokke] school relies on the way of the kami of its own country,

29 "Sanjūbanjin yurai no koto," in *Shintō taii*, ST 8, pp. 38–40. The passage was later quoted, in abbreviated form, in *Hokke shintō hiketsu* 4, p. 14. In "Sanjūbanjin yurai no koto" Kanetomo also gives the names of the thirty kami; his list corresponds to that venerated in the Hokke school.

30 This hypothesis has been put forward by Hirono (1924).

31 This is indicated in a note addressed to Myōhonji, which is included in the last section of the *Banjin mondōki* (*Banjin mondōki* 22*v*) and is reiterated in a letter sent by Nippō to Nichigu (*Ryūge hishō*, NSZ 19, p. 87). Cf. also Sonoda (1966c), pp. 190–1 and Miyagawa (1986), p. 270.

> [there will be] reverence for the divine ruler and respect for the country and a profound divine response (*kannō*) will certainly arise.[32]

In his second rejoinder to Myōhonji, Kanetomo also explained his theory of three types of Shinto and the meaning of his "original Shinto" (*genpon sōgen shintō*), which he presented as the source of the three teachings of Buddhism, Confucianism, and kami worship.[33] Kanetomo reiterated the idea that Japan is a divine country and that its "original kami" transformed themselves for the benefit of human beings by "mingling with the dust and softening their radiance"; the *sanjūbanjin*, too, originated in this "Shinto."[34]

Thus the discussion on the nature of the *sanjūbanjin* served Kanetomo as an occasion to propagate his theories in Buddhist circles. It is possible that he tried to sell his interpretation of kami to the Hokke monks because these had not yet formulated a comprehensive kami discourse.[35] Kanetomo would hardly have needed to argue for the benefits that arose from venerating the kami of Japan, because these kami were already worshiped in the temples of the Hokke school. The point he had to make concerned the nature of these kami. One should, however, also consider that the three temples addressed by Kanetomo were powerful establishments which had enjoyed the support of the court and the bakufu alike and which, therefore, Kanetomo may have regarded as competing centres of kami worship.

Responses from the Hokke school

The three temples to whom Kanetomo had sent his letters replied in varying fashions and at different times. The only response that is included in *Banjin*

32 *Banjin mondōki* 2–2*v*. *Shinkyō* here indicates one of the three formularies devised by Kanetomo, the *Sangen shintō sanmyō kajikyō*, which in fact includes this passage, with only one difference: the word "kami" is there replaced by the word *shintō*. This passage is also cited twice in Kanetomo's major work *Yuiitsu shintō myōbō yōshū*. See Demura (1997), pp. 83–5.

33 *Banjin mondōki*, pp. 19–20. This part closely resembles, albeit in abbreviated form, the initial section of Kanetomo's *Yuiitsu shintō myōbō yōshū*, ST vol. Urabe Shintō jō, pp. 55–7. For a comparison of the *Banjin mondōki* with relevant passages of *Yuiitsu shintō myōbō yōshū* and *Shintō taii* see Demura (1997), pp. 95–9. Because of these similarities, the *Banjin mondōki* is regarded an important source to identify the formation of Kanetomo's thought. See Demura 1997, pp. 93–5, which contains an account of the position of modern scholarship.

34 The appendix on the origin of the *sanjūbanjin* which concludes Kanetomo's *Shintō taii* also closes reiterating that the kami way promoted by Kanetomo is the origin of all traditions, including Buddhism and Confucianism. "Sanjūbanjin yurai no koto," ST vol. Urabe Shintō jō, p. 40.

35 Sonoda (1966c), p. 191. Miura, however, pointed out that from the linguistic point of view Kanetomo's "One-and-Only Shinto" resembled the Hokke doctrines of the *Lotus Sutra* as the "One Vehicle" (1912, p. 13).

mondōki is that from Myōhonji and it is dated 1497/3/5. It is signed by Ryūgein Nippō (1471–1534), but it is thought to represent the position of Nippō's teacher, the scholar-monk Senzan Nichigu (1423–1501).[36] This letter seems to acknowledge the debt of the Hokke school to the Yoshida house and to express gratitude for Kanemasu's transmission to Nichiren of the secrets concerning the *sanjūbanjin*.[37] On the other hand, Nippō/Nichigu argued that even though the Hokke temples used the same *sanjūbanjin* as the Tendai and Yoshida lineages, the interpretation of their meaning set the *sanjūbanjin* of the Hokke school apart. In fact, in their long response to Kanetomo Nippō/Nichigu articulated a series of correspondences between the thirty kami and elements of Lotus doctrine, which would integrate the *sanjūbanjin* into a *shinbutsu shūgō* framework and shape their identity as the core of a distinct discourse on the kami. Because of their importance in the formulation of "Hokke Shinto," I shall examine these ideas in some detail below.

Fragments from the replies from the other two temples have been preserved among the historical documents of the various Hokke lineages. The reply from Honkokuji, signed by a certain Nichiju who was in charge of the tutelary shrine of the Honkokuji, did not elaborate on the meaning of the *sanjūbanjin*. Instead, it cited a passage from a major Tiantai text, the *Mohe zhiguan*, where "to dim their radiance and mingle with the dust of the world" (*wakō dōjin*, an expression that in medieval Japan had come to define the role of the kami) was presented as the first step in the process of enlightenment of the Buddha, revealing his power of transformation in order to build a relation (*kechien*) with human beings and benefit them.[38] The reply from the Myōrenji, on the contrary, was a more comprehensive response from the scholar-monk Jōjūin Nitchū (1438–1503), who took issue with Kanetomo's claims. Nitchū defended the uniqueness of Hokke worship of the *sanjūbanjin*, asserting that it was not adopted from either Tendai or the Yoshida: the *sanjūbanjin* were the kami who had responded (*kannō*) to the power of the Dharma when Nichizō started propagating the Lotus doctrine in the capital, and thus became protectors of the *Lotus Sutra*. Nitchū also refuted the story of Kanemasu's transmission of the names of the deities to Nichiren, pointing out that there was no evidence that Nichiren ever went to Kyoto between the time he established his school, in 1253 according to sectarian historiography, and his death in 1282. Furthermore, Nitchū emphasised that when Nichiren started his

36 *Banjin mondōki* 2*v*–18. Nichigu, head of the Myōhonji, had retired to Bitchū province when Kanetomo's enquiry reached the temple. Nichigu, however, sent his response to Nippō, a disciple who was acting as the head of the temple. This is the reason why the reply to Kanetomo was issued after some months of delay. On Nichigu see Shigyō (1952), pp. 74–7 and NJ, p. 593.

37 The identification of the *sanjūbanjin* with the protective kami of the imperial palace also appears in a letter of instructions that Nichigu sent to Nippō. *Ryūge hishō* NSZ 19, p. 96.

38 *Yōhōji kyūki* 1, quoted in Hirono (1924), pp. 14–15 and Miyagawa (1986), pp. 267–9. Cf. *Mohe zhiguan* 6 *ge*, T 46, p. 80a.

activities as a practitioner of the Lotus, he invoked "the great and small kami of the sixty-six provinces of Japan" and adopted Amaterasu and Hachiman as protective deities; thus he did not appropriate the worship of these kami from Kanemasu. Nitchū concluded his letter by explaining that while other Buddhist schools taught heretical doctrines (*jahō*), the Hokke school embodied the correct teaching of the Buddha, and that if the correct doctrine was practised, the protective deities descended even without being invited. Thus the *sanjūbanjin* existed and were venerated in Hokke temples because of the power of the Buddhist Dharma.[39]

The question of how different the *sanjūbanjin* of the Hokke school were from the set of deities venerated in Tendai and that venerated by the Yoshida priests remained a constant preoccupation of Hokke scholar-monks, and would be addressed time and again in later Hokke Shinto writings. The interest that Kanetomo displayed in these deities had, however, crucial consequences for the formulation of an independent kami theory in the Hokke school. First of all, by suggesting that the *sanjūbanjin* might have been different kami from those worshiped in the Tendai school, and by inventing a Yoshida tradition of the *sanjūbanjin*, Kanetomo helped the Hokke school to construct an identity distinct from Tendai in the area of kami worship, and to support it with the authority of the Yoshida. In this sense, the dispute on the *sanjūbanjin* brought benefits to both the shrine lineages and the temple lineages involved in it. Even the story of Kanemasu's transmission of the names of the kami to Nichiren served the purposes of Hokke apologetes, because it contributed to shaping an image of the founder of the school as a learned monk who was conversant not only with Buddhism but with other practices as well. This, in fact, may have been the reason why the story appears in hagiographic writings of the Hokke school, starting from the earliest biographies of Nichiren.[40] Second, and more importantly, Kanetomo's attempt to supply the Hokke school with his own kami theory prompted the Buddhist scholar-monks to rethink the meaning of the *sanjūbanjin* and to articulate a specific *honji suijaku* interpretation that eventually would become "Hokke Shinto."

Further exchanges between Hokke and Yoshida lineages

The fifteenth century debate on the *sanjūbanjin* described above appears to have marked the beginning of a friendly and close relationship between the Hokke school and the Yoshida house. Different sources document various

39 *Yōhōji kyūki* 1, quoted in Hirono (1924), pp. 12–13. Nitchū seems to have exchanged other letters with Kanetomo. Another reply preserved with his name, however, suggests that Nitchū, if he was indeed the author, eventually took a position closer to Kanetomo's with regard to the *sanjūbanjin*. See Miyagawa (1986), pp. 269–70.

40 Miura (1912), pp. 19 and 8.

contacts between shrines and temples, which included reciprocal lectures, secret transmissions, and political alliances, testifying to the strong ties that the Hokke school established with that major shrine lineage. Diaries and postscripts to writings produced by members of the Yoshida house reveal that Yoshida priests lectured in various regional centres of the Hokke school several times between 1536 and the late Tenmon era (1532–54), sponsored by the temples.[41] The activities of Hokke priests, too, show continuing contacts with prominent figures of the Yoshida lineages. To illustrate the nature of this interaction, which is important to understand the context in which Hokke Shinto was elaborated, I shall briefly examine the biographies of two representatives of the Hokke school in the area of the capital: Jōei Nisshū of the Nisshin lineage, and his contemporary Busshin'in Nichikō of the Nakayama lineage in Kyoto.

Nisshū (1532–94) entered Mount Hiei at the age of seven and studied there for twelve years. Autobiographical remarks in his writings attest that he studied "Shinto" and Confucianism with Kiyowara Nobukata (1475–1550), Kanetomo's third son, who had been adopted into the Kiyowara house of Confucians and was one of the most prominent intellectuals of the time.[42] It is not clear when Nisshū's instruction took place, but since Nobukata used to lecture on the kami and Japanese classics at Hiei, Nisshū may have come into contact with him there. It is also possible that they met when, later in his life, Nobukata lectured on the *Nihon shoki* and on the *Nakatomi harae* at Hokke temples in Echizen.[43] Nisshū was allowed to peruse the secret books of the Yoshida house, and in 1552 had access to the Buddhist canon held by the Sumiyoshi shrine in Sakai. At this shrine he is said to have recited the second and sixteenth chapters of the *Lotus Sutra* in front of the kami and, furthermore, to have lectured on a "kami book" (*shinsho*, probably the *Nihon shoki*) for the shrine priests. Apparently his lecture was so successful that he was invited to repeat it at the house of the resident priest. Nisshū also lectured on kami matters and on the *Lotus Sutra* at other shrine complexes such as Iwashimizu Hachimangū.

Nichikō (1532–98), too, was a typical scholar-monk of the period. He studied on Mount Hiei and at Onjōji, and established several temples and learning centres (*danrin*) for his school. Like Nisshū, he lectured at court for the emperors Ōgimachi and Go-Yōzei on the three major Tendai works, and, together with Nisshū, was a prominent figure in the Azuchi debates against

41 Ibid., pp. 20–1.

42 See *Zenshi*, p. 498 and Sonoda (1966b), pp. 61–5. Drawing from what Nisshū recorded in his *Chinju kanjō gakugo yō* and from other chronicles of the Hokke school, Sonoda offers a detailed biography of this monk, which also examines the court relations of the Hokke school. For a discussion of Nisshū's doctrinal position, see Shigyō (1952), pp. 132–6.

43 I am here referring to postscripts to the second and third fascicles of Nobukata's *Nihon shoki shō*, cited in Sonoda (1966b), pp. 64 and 66–7. Nobukata died during one of his visits to Echizen.

the Jōdoshū which occurred in 1579 by order of Nobunaga.[44] Nichikō acquired ritual information on kami worship from the Yoshida: a document attests that in 1560 he received the transmission of the names of the *sanjūbanjin* from Nobukata's son Kanemigi (1516–73), then *gon no taifu* of the Jingikan and head of the Yoshida lineage. This transmission, defined as "the most secret of secrets," included the order in which the kami were allocated to the days of the month and their appearance, that is, whether they were represented as female or male deities, what accessories they held, and what kind of robes they wore.[45] Nichikō also lectured on the kami. One of these lectures, given in the fifth month of 1590 at Chōmyōji, his temple in Kyoto, was recorded by Ichinyoin Nichijū (1550–1621) and became the text of Nichikō's major work, *Shintō dōitsu kanmishō*. This writing, one of the three major Hokke Shinto texts, is in fact a lecture on the section on the age of the gods in the *Nihon shoki*, a manuscript of which was in the possession of the Chōmyōji.[46] To Nichikō is also attributed another, shorter writing on kami, *Shintō shinpi*.

Contacts with shrine lineages seem to have offered Hokke monks practical benefits, ranging from access to shrine-temple complexes and their collections of Buddhist texts to scholastic knowledge of kami-related texts, which allowed them to write and lecture on the topic of kami. The Yoshida had since the early medieval period gained a reputation as experts on kami classics, and this may explain why several Hokke scholar-monks of the sixteenth century studied with members of the Yoshida house. Other monks worth mentioning include Kōzō Nisshin (1508–76) of the Nichison lineage, who is said to have learned about Shinto and Japanese classics from Kiyowara Nobukata in the early 1530s, and was allowed to use the Buddhist canon held at the Kitano complex in 1547;[47] and the aforementioned Ichinyoin Nichijū, of the Minobu lineage, to whom Nobukata's grandson Kiyowara Shigekata taught classics such as the *Book of Filial Piety*, the *Analects*, and the *Nihon shoki*, and who was himself the author of a work titled *Hokke shinsho*.[48] Exchanges between the two lineages even seem to have extended to political, and perhaps military, support. During the Hokke *ikki* of the Tenmon period, when the Hokke temples came into conflict with the Sanmon branch of

44 A biography of Nichikō is in Shigyō (1952), pp. 71–2 and NJ, p. 599. On the Azuchi debate see, for instance, *Zenshi*, pp. 470ff.

45 *Chōmyōji bunshō*, NSZ 22, pp. 206–10. The colophon of the document bears the signature of Kanemigi as the "head of Shinto" (*shintō chōjō*). See *Zenshi*, pp. 498–9. In this transmission Amaterasu, who in *sanjūbanjin* iconography is usually represented as a male courtier, is given the form of a female deity.

46 Shigyō (1952), p. 72. *Shintō dōitsu kanmishō*, also known as *Shintō shishō* (Iwabashi, 1934, p. 25), was originally in three fascicles, but was eventually rearranged in six and published in 1688. NJ gives 1549–1623 as dates for Nichijū.

47 NJ, p. 661.

48 Ibid., p. 610. *Hokke shinsho* is also known as *Hokke sanjūbanjin shō* or *Sanjūbanjin shō*.

Tendai, Kanetomo's second son Kanenaga (1471–1536), head of the Hirano shrine and *taifu* of the Jingikan, is said to have sided with the Hokke party. He died during a fight against the monks of Mount Hiei in 1536.[49]

Interactions as well as confrontations between Hokke school and shrine-related circles continued well into the Edo period. *Kōfu shintō mondōki*, for instance, testifies to a debate on kami matters at Hokkeji in Kōfu in 1807 between Eichiin Nissen (1760–1846) and more than thirty "Shinto-affiliated people." Nissen had been lecturing in temples of that province advocating the unity of kami and buddhas along the lines of Hokke exegesis, in order to counterbalance the interpretations of Shinto advocates such as Mitsuhata Hikoto, who presented Buddhism and Confucianism as beliefs that would alienate people from the blessings of the kami and lead them to live as beasts. It was after one of these lectures that the debate was held. Nissen seems to have defended his reading of the nature of the kami also by referring to arguments put forward by the Yoshida: he pointed out that there was not only one Shinto but eighteen types, including those known as "*honji suijaku* Shinto" and "*yuiitsu* Shinto," and noted that many of these types were actually derived from Buddhism and thus could not be understood in opposition to it.[50]

Writings of Hokke Shinto

The emphasis put on the secrecy of ritual matters related to the *sanjūbanjin* places the interactions between Hokke monks and the Yoshida house in the context of a specific way of acquiring knowledge that pervaded medieval religious circles, and indeed the entire medieval culture. At first, the use of secret transmissions appears to accentuate the exclusive possession of doctrinal and ritual information, accessible only to those who belong to a certain lineage, either by birth or adoption. Information, however, was exchanged between shrine and temple lineages and thus circulated more widely than the category of "secret" would imply, much in the same way as Buddhist esoteric ritual knowledge, which was exchanged widely by monks affiliated to competing temple lineages. Several features of the worship of the *sanjūbanjin* were not fixed, leaving room for producing alternative versions of the ritual, which an oral transmission (*kuden*) would then legitimate, as we have seen in the case of Nichikō. Eventually *kuden* became a rhetorical device and a literary convention that repeated the patterns of religious transmission. They were written down, although they continued to be deemed secret: the colophon of

49 *Zenshi*, pp. 363, 497. Kanenaga had been adopted into the Hirano lineage of the Urabe house. The Hokke *ikki* were known in sectarian literature as "the persecution of the Tenmon period" (*Tenmon hōnan*).

50 Sakawa (1986), p. 287. A description of the debate, which includes the names of the major Shinto-related participants, is in NJ, pp. 668–9.

one of the major works on Hokke Shinto presents it as the "most secret *kuden* concerning the most important matter of the Shinto of this school," which should not be divulged.[51]

It was in this context that the Hokke communities started producing a great number of writings on their kami interpretations. The sixteenth century saw the compilation of two works that, together with the *Banjin mondōki*, would be later known as the "three major books of Hokke Shinto" (*Hokke shintō sandaisho*): *Shinto dōitsu kanmishō,* mentioned above, and *Hokke shintō hiketsu*, to which I shall return shortly. Other influential essays, such as Nichijū's *Hokke shinsho* and the extensive *Chinju kanjō gakugo yō*, which will be discussed below, were also compiled at the end of the sixteenth century. Leading Hokke scholar-monks continued writing on kami matters well into the Edo period, as *Shinbutsu myōōron* by Ryōgiin Nittatsu (1674–1747) and *Banjin engiron* (a.k.a. *Honji suijaku hokke kanjō banjin engiron*) by Eichiin Nissen, the protagonist of the Kōfu debate, attest. These writings were also published, assuring them an even wider circulation: *Hokke shinsho* was printed in 1719 and *Banjin engiron* in 1837; of the earlier manuscripts, an edition of the *Banjin mondōki*, which Nittatsu had transcribed from *kanbun* into Japanese, was printed in 1817 with the title of *Hokke chingo banjin mondōki*.[52]

These writings discussed the worship of the *sanjūbanjin*, but also dealt with other themes related to the kami, revealing that a specific and comprehensive discourse on "Shinto" had taken shape in the Hokke school. It is impossible to attempt a comprehensive overview of the issues Hokke monks addressed in the limited space of this chapter. To give an idea of their concerns and of the exegesis that were developed, I shall look at some points that emerge from two early works: *Hokke shintō hiketsu* and *Chinju kanjō gakugo yō*.

Hokke shintō hiketsu *and the justification of the worship of kami*

Hokke shintō hiketsu, attributed to Enmyō Nitchō (1441–1510), the founder of the Myōhōji in Kamakura, is a comprehensive interpretation of kami matters in four fascicles, of which the last is devoted to the *sanjūbanjin*.[53]

51 *Hokke shintō hiketsu* 4, p. 28*v*. For a discussion of the tradition of oral transmissions in medieval Japan (focusing on Tendai and Hokke Buddhism), see Stone (1999).

52 Sakawa (1986), pp. 286–7.

53 *Hokke shintō hiketsu*, printed edition dated Eiroku 13 (1570)/6/19, library of Kyoto University. Doubts on Nitchō's authorship have been raised since pre-modern times. A date in the body of the text, which is forty years later than Nitchō's death, suggests that it must have been written in the Eiroku years (1558–69) either by a disciple of Nitchō or by someone with the same name, and attributed to Nitchō to antedate the interpretation of kami that it contained. *Zenshi*, p. 499.

The first fascicle addresses one of the most controversial topics that affected the worship of kami in the Hokke school: whether devotion to the gods of Japan was compatible with the doctrines of the school. As mentioned earlier, there was a movement within the various Hokke lineages to oppose the worship of kami. Its advocates argued that since only evil spirits were left in Japanese shrines, to venerate them would reinforce their evil power without bringing any benefit to people; if, on the contrary, offerings to the kami ceased, this would be an act of compassion because it would help the monks working at shrines to realise the need to adhere to the correct Dharma, represented by the teachings of the Hokke school. This position was legitimated by an idea that appears in Nichiren's writings, that the good gods who protected Japan had returned to heaven because nobody in Japan followed the correct teachings of the *Lotus Sutra*.[54] To reject any practice directed toward the kami was, however, an extreme position which would have had disastrous consequences for the economy of the temple complexes and was not fully supported by all Hokke lineages. There also was an alternative way to interpret the notion that the gods had abandoned Japan: the kami would descend once more to protect anyone who had become a practitioner of the Lotus.[55] It is this view that we find in Hokke writings on the kami.

The author of *Hokke shintō hiketsu* at first seems to embrace the idea that kami should not be worshipped. Presenting a new version of a popular taxonomy of the kami, he discussed the existence of three types of gods: "kami of Dharma-nature" (*hosshōshin*), who are at the same time kami and buddhas; "enlightened kami" (*ugakushin*), that is, kami who manifest their Dharma-nature by "mingling with the dust" in order to bring benefits to human beings; and "evil kami" (*jaakushin*).[56] He concluded that although a person born in a "divine country" could not turn one's back on the kami, it was necessary to stop visiting shrines which "slander the Buddhist Dharma," because they were inhabited by evil kami. On the other hand, if one believed

54 Miyazaki (1958), pp. 91–2. The notion that the kami had left Japan was known in sectarian literature as *shintenjō hōmon*.

55 Ibid., pp. 91–2.

56 Iwabashi (1934), pp. 23–4 argues that this taxonomy was derived from the theory of the three Buddha-bodies. However, while the Dharma-kami and the enlightened kami are easily comparable to the Buddha's Dharma body and manifestation body, it is unlikely that the evil kami would correspond to the reward body. A threefold taxonomy, known as the "theory of the three types of kami" (*sanjinsetsu*), seems to have circulated from the early Kamakura period, and at a certain moment it was included in the *Nakatomi harae kunge*, where the three categories were named *hongakushin* ("kami of original enlightenment"), *fukakushin* ("kami of no-enlightenment") and *shigakushin* ("kami of gradual enlightenment"). In this taxonomy the *hongakushin* were the kami of Ise. See Tamura (1990), Teeuwen and Van der Veere (1988), pp. 50–1 and 70–1, and the introduction to this volume. Tamura considers the theory of the three types of kami as an example of "inverted *honji suijaku*." Yet *Hokke shintō hiketsu* is clearly written from the standpoint of traditional *honji suijaku*, as is unambiguously revealed in the explanation of the *sanjūbanjin* which is discussed later.

in the *Lotus Sutra*, one would receive the protection of the good kami, who had vowed to protect the devotees of the Lotus.[57] This argument was in line with the one that Nitchū had put forward in his reply to Kanetomo. One should also note that the logic behind these assertions was similar to that used by other Buddhist lineages who wanted to justify their kami worship while at the same time trying to maintain a formal rejection of it. In Jōdo Shinshū literature, for instance, it was contended that the kami rejoiced when one recited the *nenbutsu*, and that therefore there was no reason to pay visits to shrines.[58]

To prove that the good kami continued to protect the practitioners of the Lotus even though they have returned to heaven, the author of *Hokke shintō hiketsu* cited the *Lotus Sutra* itself, in particular passages that speak of the "divine power" (*jinriki*) or the "divine permeation" (*jinzū*) of the Tathāgata. In this way he constructed a textual ground for the worship of the *sanjūbanjin*. Interestingly, these same scriptural passages were among the quotations from the Hokke school's canonical literature that one finds inscribed on pictorial representations of the *sanjūbanjin*, together with the names of those who offered the icons and the date at which the donation was made. In the icons, the phrases from the sutra unequivocally set the Buddhist context in which the worship of the *sanjūbanjin* was to be understood, a function similar to that fulfilled by the inscription of other sentences from the *Lotus Sutra* in Nichiren's mandalas. A study of a number of these icons reveals that the passages come mostly from two chapters of the sutra, "The life-span of the Tathāgata" and "Dhāraṇī."[59] Both these inscriptions and the quotations in *Hokke shintō hiketsu* thus used the same logic in legitimising the worship of the *sanjūbanjin*. On the one hand, they emphasised the absolute nature of the Buddha of the Lotus and his continuous presence in the world through innumerable manifestations, through which he benefits human beings, as expressed in "The life-span of the Tathāgata" chapter. On the other hand, by pointing out that already in the sutra several deities pledged to protect the devotee of the Lotus, as narrated in the "Dhāraṇī" chapter, these canonical references helped assimilating the *sanjūbanjin* to other protective deities of the Lotus venerated in the school.

Hokke shintō hiketsu mainly discussed the status of the *sanjūbanjin* within a traditional *honji suijaku* structure. This is most explicit in the fourth fascicle, which opens by proclaiming that different buddhas and bodhisattvas are the *honji* of the "deities who have returned to heaven" (namely, the

57 Quoted in Sakawa (1986), pp. 289–90.

58 Tamura (1990), p. 450.

59 For an analysis of thirty inscriptions from pictorial representations produced from the Muromachi to the Edo period, see Ara (1997). Another recurrent quotation in both the icons and the text of Hokke Shinto is the passage of the *Mohe zhiguan* mentioned above, referring to the Buddha's transformations in order to "dim the [Buddha's] radiance and mingle with the dust."

protective kami of Japan), but the origin (*konpon*) of these buddhas and bodhisattvas is Śākyamuni. There is no other buddha but Śākyamuni, therefore the kami who dim their radiance and mingle with the dust, too, are none other than the one Buddha Śākyamuni. This is the meaning of the passages of the *Lotus Sutra* that proclaim the power of transformation of the Buddha. The text goes further to assert that, if the one Buddha Śākyamuni is at the same time the origin of all buddhas and the *honji* of all kami, it is the *Lotus Sutra* that epitomises the "Dharma flavour" which is the true intent of all kami and all buddhas.[60] All kami who are "traces" (*suijaku*) thus exist thanks to the *Lotus Sutra* and, at the same time, embody the reality of enlightenment (the Dharma flavour) represented by the Lotus.

The compiler of the *Hokke shintō hiketsu*, however, did not hesitate to also use non-Buddhist sources to make this point. For instance, he cited a passage of the *Sanja takusen* (*Oracles of the three shrines*) which asserted that oracles "on the surface are words of the kami but at bottom are the Buddha's teachings."[61] As we shall see shortly, *Hokke shintō hiketsu* also formulated a correspondence between kami and Hokke Buddhism by reading the *sanjūbanjin* in Lotus terms, in this way following an exegetical tradition initiated in the *Banjin mondōki*.

Chinju kanjō gakugo yō and the definition of kami

Chinju kanjō gakugo yō was compiled by Nisshū in the last decades of the sixteenth century.[62] It deals with several kami matters, listed under twenty-seven topics.[63] One of the first questions it addresses is the meaning of the term kami.

Like most contemporary Buddhist scholar-monks, Nisshū maintained that deities existed in function of their role of tutelary deities of Buddhism, but he placed the Japanese kami in a more international context. He discussed

60 *Hokke shintō hiketsu* 4, pp. 1–1v. The text includes a list of the *sanjūbanjin* with their different *honji*, but this is presented as the set venerated in Tendai Lotus practices. Toward the end of the fascicle, the author refers to the notion of the relative superiority of Lotus and esoteric teachings (in particular Taimitsu), which had characterised Nichiren's doctrine, to differentiate between the *sanjūbanjin* used in Tendai Lotus practices and the *sanjūbanjin* of the Hokke school. In this context he also criticises theories that regarded Dainichi as the *honji* of Amaterasu (4, pp. 21v–24).

61 In fact, the text continues with an interpretation of the *Sanja takusen* and of other kami oracles: *Hokke shintō hiketsu* 4, pp. 2–5. The idea that oracles are words of the Buddha may be seen in contrast to the claims (found e.g. in the *Taiheiki*) that Amaterasu appeared in the world as Śākyamuni to preach the *Lotus Sutra*.

62 Shigyō Kaishū (1952) gives the date of 1588. *Zenshi*, p. 498, however, assumes that Nisshū wrote this work for the priests of the Sumiyoshi shrine following his lectures there, around 1552. Sonoda (1967), pp. 67–9 discusses the dating of this work considering other sources as well.

63 For a list of these twenty-seven topics see Sonoda (1967), pp. 63–7.

the different protective deities that had assisted Buddhism in the three major Buddhist countries (India, China, and Japan), starting with Indian gods such as Indra and Brahmā, the Four Heavenly Kings and Kumbhīra; then he described the cosmogony of each type of "Shinto" in these Buddhist countries. His explanation of the Japanese cosmogony seems to be influenced by Yoshida ideas at various levels. For instance, Nisshū regarded the "kami who established the country of Japan" as "the ever-existing essence of the universe," a statement similar to Kanetomo's assertion, in his *Shintō taii*, that the kami were what existed before heaven and earth. He even invested these kami with the essence of the Buddha's Dharma-body (*hosshin*), by defining them as the "place without beginning and without end [that existed] before heaven and earth separated" (*tenchi mibun no mushi mushū no tokoro*).[64] Here Nisshū efficiently combined the language of Yoshida writings, which presented the original kami as predating distinction, with that of esoteric Buddhism, which depicted the absolute Buddha as having "no beginning and no end" – an expression that was already in the hermeneutical tradition of the Hokke school because Nichiren had employed it to redefine the Śākyamuni of the *Lotus Sutra*.[65] In this way the kami were no longer posited as mere tutelary deities of Buddhism, its sutras and its practitioners, and thus somewhat inferior to the buddhas; rather, they were the very embodiment of the universal Buddha.

On another level, too, Nisshū's interpretation seems to have been informed by Yoshida theories. His discourse on the kami focuses on the *Nihon shoki*, and displays a certain construction of Japan as a divine country (*shinkoku*) similar to the Yoshida idea of Shinto as the root of Buddhism and Confucianism. For instance, Nisshū argued that the section on the age of the gods in the *Nihon shoki* gave meaning to the existence of the three Buddhist countries, in this way suggesting the superiority of Japan over the other countries of the Buddhist world.[66]

A last point of interest in *Chinju kanjō gakugo yō* is Nisshū's understanding of Amaterasu. Nisshū placed the sun goddess at the top of the pantheon of Japanese kami by playing on the terms for "deity." He claimed that Amaterasu was the only deity worthy of the title *shinmei* 神明, while the other gods were mere *myōjin* 明神 manifestations of the original deity. Nisshū's argument seems to be based on the way in which the two terms for deity, *shinmei* and *myōjin*, are written: with the same characters but in inverted order, which means, in vertical writing, with a different character on top. Thus Nisshū claimed that *myōjin* means "kami 神 under the light 明," and connotes

64 Sonoda (1967), p. 64.

65 On Yoshida's monistic theories see Scheid (2000) and Scheid (2001), pp. 247–52, where he discusses Kanetomo's idea of the "Shinto of India" and the "Shinto of China." On the esoteric terminology of Nichiren's definition of the Buddha see Dolce (1999).

66 Sonoda (1967), p. 64.

deities subordinate to the "light" embodied by Amaterasu. Further research is needed to find out whether Nisshū invented this exegesis or whether it was already circulating among shrine and temple priests.[67] Here one should note that such readings of the position of Amaterasu also reinforced the idea of Japan as a divine country. This, however, was by no means a new concept of the Hokke school. Documents related to the mandala transmitted by Nichizō had asserted that "Japan is a divine country because it is the country of Amaterasu Ōmikami. The *sanjūbanjin*, too, are venerated because [Japan] is a divine country."[68]

The world of numeric correspondences

The discussion of the meaning of kami that takes place in Hokke Shinto texts reflects themes popular in medieval Buddhist circles. It also uses a language that is very close to the discursive logic of esoteric writings of the period, and to so-called *hongaku* texts, in creating associations between unconnected elements by means of word play.[69]

The **sanjūbanjin** *and the notion of* **ichinen sanzen**

One of the most common of such combinatory readings concerns the *sanjūbanjin*, and is first found in *Banjin mondōki*. It establishes numeric correlations between the thirty kami and the idea of *ichinen sanzen* ("one single thought contains the three thousand worlds"), an expression that was used in Tendai and Hokke ontology to indicate the conception of reality as an interdependent unity, where the whole is comprised in one moment of thought. The correspondence with the kami is constructed by dissecting the four characters that form the word *sanjūbanjin* and associating each of them to elements that form the concept of *ichinen sanzen*:

> "Three" (*san*) signifies the threefold truth (*santai*, i.e. emptiness, conventional existence and middle way), which is identical (*soku*) with the wonderful Dharma (*myōhō*); "ten" (*jū*) indicates . . . the ten worlds (*jikkai*, i.e. the ten destinies of transmigration); "order" (*ban*) means that the ten worlds and the threefold truth are mutually encompassing (*gogu*) and harmonious, and yet are not one; "kami" (*jin*) indicates that the original portion of the single mind (*isshin honbun*) is the nature of the myriad dharmas (*manpō jishō*). This is

67 One would find this again in later kami literature. See, for instance, the *Sanja takusen ryakushō*, dated 1650, translated in Bocking (2001), p. 59.

68 *Honzonron shiryō* 2, p. 406, cited in Sonoda (1966b), p. 182.

69 For an outline of the relation of medieval kami doctrines to *hongaku* readings see Tamura (1990), and, in English, Stone (1999), pp. 40–3.

> what is called *sanjūbanjin*. This is the wonderful essence of the Lotus and the body and mind (*shikishin*) of the [Lotus] practitioner. The deities who protect and the sutra that is protected are one with the body and the mind of the [Lotus] practitioner.[70]

This exegesis gives an absolute nature to the *sanjūbanjin* by transforming them into a manifestation of the co-penetrating reality that is the essence of the world, and of the indivisibility of the whole and its parts. The deities represent the phenomenal aspect of reality, but at the same time they embody its "subtle" (that is, noumenal) nature. Because of this quality, kami can be regarded as "the true body (*shintai*) of the *Lotus Sutra*," the scripture that epitomises this integration.[71] In this sense *Banjin mondōki* can assert: "The way of the buddhas and the way of the kami have the same principle (*butsudō shintō ridō*): the oneness of ultimate truth and relative truth."[72]

If the *sanjūbanjin* are a symbol of reality, the fact that they were a set of thirty kami becomes irrelevant. Thus, early Hokke Shinto writings put forward the idea that the number thirty is only metonymycal: "In these thirty kami the entirety of kami, one and all, is subsumed."[73] Accordingly, it is not so that each kami protects one day of the month; the deities who protect the Lotus and its devotees are not limited to thirty, but include the myriads of gods of heaven and earth.[74] In *Banjin mondōki* this nature of the *sanjūbanjin* is epitomised in one sentence: "One kami is all kami, and all kami are one kami (*isshin issaishin*)."[75] This expression undoubtedly reiterates a famous passage of Annen's *Kyōjigi*, where the Buddha of the esoteric teachings is presented as the only reality of the universe, the "one Buddha who is all buddhas" and in whom "all buddhas are one Buddha."[76] Thus the kami share the same characteristics as the absolute Buddha, and become doubles of the perfect buddha-nature. Exactly this understanding of the nature of the *sanjūbanjin* is what the Hokke monks claim to be the distinctive feature of the Hokke worship of the *sanjūbanjin*, the secret meaning of a level of truth that other Buddhist and shrine traditions had not penetrated.[77]

70 *Banjin mondōki*, p. 6. The same passage, with more explanations of corresponding Tendai concepts, is in *Hokke shintō hiketsu* 4, pp. 25*v*–26. This interpretation was influential in the formulation of Hokke Shinto and would be often quoted, in abbreviated form, in writings of other Hokke lineages. For instance, *Shaka tahō goji shitsu kuketsu* by Honjōbō Nichijitsu (active 1461) of the Nakayama lineage states: " 'Three' indicates three thousand; 'ten' indicates the realms of the ten directions; 'order' is the interrelation of the three kinds of beings (*sanze sōen*), 'kami' (*shin*) is the mind (*shinpō*)." Shigyō (1952), p. 69.

71 *Banjin mondōki*, p. 4.

72 Ibid.

73 *Hokke shintō hiketsu* 4, p. 25.

74 Ibid., pp. 24*v*, 25.

75 *Banjin mondōki*, p. 4. The same expression occurs in *Hokke shintō hiketsu* 4, pp. 24*v*, 25.

76 *Kyōjiki*, NDZ 45, p. 243.

77 *Banjin mondōki*, p. 5.

Interpreting the three regalia

The logic of numeric associations is applied also to other kami-related concepts, such as the three regalia. *Chinju kanjō gakugo yō* contains a complex explanation of the "Buddhist identity" of the three regalia, which equates them to successive categories of Buddhist concepts: the "three great secrets" (*sandaihihō*) of Nichiren doctrine, namely, the object of worship (*honzon*), the title of the *Lotus Sutra* (*daimoku*) and the platform of ordination (*kaidan*); the three truths of Tendai doctrine, the three Buddha-bodies, the three Buddhist Treasures, and so on. For instance, the sacred mirror (*naishidokoro*) is said to represent the *daimoku*, the conventional truth, the Buddha's manifestation body (*ōjin*), and the Saṃgha; the sword is said to symbolise the *kaidan*, emptiness, the Buddha's reward-body (*hōin*), and the Buddha (as one of the Three Treasures); finally, the jewels epitomise the *honzon*, the middle way, the Buddha's Dharma-body (*hosshin*), and the Dharma.[78]

These correspondences reconsidered the three regalia, a major element of the official discourse on the kami, within the framework of general Buddhist notions and of the specific doctrines of the Nichiren tradition. Such an associative operation allowed the temple lineages to appropriate the world of the kami in each of its aspects, and in a fashion distinctive of the Hokke school. Further study is necessary to identify the political relevance of these associations concerning the regalia. One may note, however, that by placing them on the same level as the "three great secrets" that formed the core of the doctrine of their school, Hokke monks gave the three regalia a more fundamental and absolute significance: they were not only physical objects but embodied essential notions, and, insofar as equated to the *sandaihihō*, they could be seen as epitomes of the world of buddhahood.

The "gods of heaven and earth"

Numeric correspondences between the world of kami and specific aspects of Hokke theology may be found throughout Hokke Shinto literature. In the writings of Honjōbō Nichijitsu (active 1461), for instance, the seven generations of heavenly gods are likened not only to the seven buddhas of the past, but also to the seven characters of the *daimoku* (*na-mu myō-hō-ren-ge-kyō*). They are contrasted with the five generations of earthly gods, which in turn are equated to the five characters of the title of the *Lotus Sutra*, *myō-hō-ren-ge-kyō*. This distinction draws on a notion elaborated in sectarian scholasticism: the *daimoku* expressed both the doctrine of the *Lotus Sutra*, with the five characters of its title, and the practice of the Lotus, when the invocation

78 Cf. Sonoda (1967), p. 66, which includes a diagram synthesising the other equivalences. The sacred mirror is called *naishidokoro* after the hall in the imperial palace where it was kept. On the identification of the sacred mirror with the *naishidokoro* see Watabe (1991), pp. 149–224.

namu was added to the title giving a seven-character formula for recitation. Nichijitsu also argued for the identity of buddhas and kami by identifying the seven generations of heavenly gods with the *honmon* section of the *Lotus Sutra*, and the five generations of earthly gods with the *shakumon* section of the sutra.[79] This, too, referred to the hermeneutical pattern followed in the Hokke school, which understood the *Lotus Sutra* as composed of two parts; at the same time it pointed to the specific interpretation of this pattern held by Nichijitsu's lineage, which maintained the essential unity of the two sections of the sutra, as against other lineages that regarded the *honmon* section as superior. In a similar way, Yōken Nichiga (1508–86) of the Fuji lineage devised equivalences between the world of the kami and the world of Buddhism which reflected the specific doctrine of *his* lineage. He regarded shrines to be the platform of ordination (*kaidan*) of the *honmon,* and the three regalia to represent the three mysteries (*hihō*) that embody the meaning of the *honmon*. The Fuji lineage upheld the superiority of the *honmon* section of the *Lotus Sutra*, and identified it with the *daimoku*, and in fact Nichiga's discourse on the kami was known as "the kami way which sows the seed [of buddhahood] of the *honmon*" (*honmon gesshu no shintō*).[80] Kami interpretations thus also helped competing Hokke lineages to emphasise their different positions in doctrinal matters.

The re-reading of the section on the age of the gods in the *Nihon shoki* which was undertaken in Hokke Shinto texts also included exegeses of specific kami that had become important in contemporary Shinto interpretations. One case in point is Nichijitsu's explanation of the name of Kuni no Tokotachi.[81] In Nichijitsu's view the first character, "land" (*kuni*), denoted the country of Japan, where the correct Dharma (that is, the doctrine of the Hokke school) would spread, and which, accordingly, could be equated with the "original land" (*hon-kokudo*) of the Buddha. The second character, "constant" (*toko*), defined this land as the "realm of serene light" (*jakkōdo*) which "abides constantly without extinction" (*jōjū fumetsu*), that is, the world of the Buddha.[82] The identity of the "original land of the Buddha" with our

79 Shigyō (1952), p. 69. One may note that correspondences between the seven generations of heavenly gods and the five generations of earthly gods on the one hand, and Buddhist elements on the other, were also formulated by the Yoshida. In one of his *Shintō taii*, for instance, Kanetomo made them correspond not only to the twelve hours of the day and the twelve months, but also to the twelve karmic relations (*innen*). ST 8, p. 26.

80 Shigyō (1952), pp. 142–3. The work cited is *Shinbutsu honji kenmon* (a.k.a. *Honji kenmon shō*). Nichiga (a.k.a. Shintaifu ajari Nichiga) also equated the two kami Amaterasu and Hachiman with the two buddhas of the *Lotus Sutra*, Śākyamuni and Prabhūtaratna, and identified the "floating bridge of heaven" of kami myth with the precious *stūpa* of the *Lotus Sutra*.

81 On the importance of Kuni no Tokotachi in Kanetomo's Shinto, and its relation to Watarai Shinto, see Teeuwen (1996), pp. 180–3.

82 Shigyō (1952), p. 69. Here Nichijitsu used the two readings of the character for "land" as *kuni* and *koku*, and of the character for "eternal" as *toko* and *jō*.

defiled world (the world of Sahā) had been put forward by Nichiren. By specifically applying it to Japan and its kami, Nichijitsu reinforced the notion that Japan was a divine country not only because it was the country of the kami but rather because it was also the Buddha-land.

These associations inferred from the name of Kuni no Tokotachi were constructed by referring to complex Tendai doctrines, but there were also others that employed more popular images of the Lotus tradition and thus appear less obscure. Among the several re-readings of the kami of the *Nihon shoki* in Lotus terms, Nichikō's, for instance, equated Inada-hime (the mother of Ōkuninushi) and Susanoo with two well-known figures from the *Lotus Sutra*, the dragon king's daughter and Devadatta. The kami were thus regarded as examples of the attainment of buddhahood in this body (*sokushin jōbutsu*), which could be achieved following the *Lotus Sutra* by everybody, as illustrated in the scripture by the cases of Devadatta, the evil cousin of the Buddha, and of the dragon king's daughter, a young woman.[83]

Worldly benefits and *sanjūbanjin* worship

By the end of the Muromachi period worship of the *sanjūbanjin* was a characteristic feature of all Hokke temples, regardless of the lineage with which they were affiliated and of the area of Japan where they were placed. Documents related to the Nakayama lineage in Chiba, and even to the Fuji lineage, many of whose monks opposed the worship of kami, attest to the popularity of the thirty gods.[84] How and under what circumstances were the *sanjūbanjin* venerated? The material examined so far does not discuss their liturgical use, but a number of suggestions may be made on the basis of historical sources and of the iconography of *sanjūbanjin* representations produced in the Hokke school.

A first element to be considered is the *jinmyōchō*, the register with the names of the kami venerated in the thirty shrines. We have already seen that it occupied an important place in transmissions related to the *sanjūbanjin*, even in the legendary transmissions. It is known that temples often owned

83 *Shinto dōitsu kanmishō*, cited in Shigyō (1952), p. 72. An early example of the identification of Susanoo with Devadatta may be found in the fourteenth century Taimitsu anthology *Keiran shūyōshū*; see Teeuwen (2000), p. 98.

84 Nisshū spoke of the spread of the *sanjūbanjin* among all Hokke branches asserting that all lineages (the Nakayama, Fuji, Minobu, Hikigayatsu and the other Kantō *monryū*) had venerated the *sanjūbanjin* since Nichizō had introduced them to the Hokke school: *Shinryū shōdenshō*, quoted in *Zenshi*, p. 498. For documents on the Nakayama lineage see Nakao (ed.) (1994), in particular pp. 172–8; on the Fuji lineage, see *Kozon zenshū*, pp. 337–9. This did not mean, however, that the worship of the *sanjūbanjin* no longer occurred in other contexts. At Suwa shrine, for instance, the *sanjūbanjin* were worshipped during the ritual copying of the *Lotus Sutra*, which was among the regular annual events of the shrine: Imahori (1990), pp. 133–4. See also Inoue's chapter in this book.

jinmyōchō recording the names of the kami venerated in their province, and monks recited these texts on certain ritual occasions.[85] One may expect that the kami register of the *sanjūbanjin*, too, was employed in this way in Hokke temples. The only example I have found of instructions on what to do with the kami register is a fragment of a letter that Nichigu sent to Nippō on the occasion of Kanetomo's enquiry. Here it is said that the name register should be regularly used, copied and displayed, while the *shintai* of the thirty gods should be kept in a box together with a copy of the *Lotus Sutra*, and stored in the shrine.[86]

The iconography of the *sanjūbanjin* offers more clues to their devotional use. Pictorial mandalas from the sixteenth century show that the thirty kami were soon associated with Kishimojin (Hārītī) and Shichimen (the tutelary deity of Mount Minobu), two popular protective deities of the school.[87] These icons were supposed to represent the assembly of the *Lotus Sutra* according to the pattern of the original calligraphic mandalas drawn by Nichiren and his disciples, but many portrayed Kishimojin as the most prominent figure placed at the centre of the icon. Although images consisting of only the *sanjūbanjin* also exist (Figure 9.1),[88] it was in this type of *honzon* that the thirty kami visually entered the world of the Hokke Lotus practices for the first time. The sitting figures of the *sanjūbanjin* are usually depicted in the lower part of these mandalas, lined up in two or five rows (Figure 9.2).[89] In some cases they occupy almost the entire icon, with Kishimojin at

85 The best known *jinmyōchō* is perhaps that included in the *Engi shiki*, which lists 2,861 shrines and 3,132 deities there enshrined, and was regarded as a sacred text, recited, studied, and annotated by the various Shinto lineages. There existed, however, other *jinmyōchō,* which listed the most important shrines of single provinces, and were used in the temple-shrine complexes to petition the kami; they are known as *kanjō jinmyōchō* or *jisha jinmyōchō*: Mitsuhashi (1999), pp. 22–5, 56–9 and 310–403.

86 *Ryūge hishō*, NSZ 19, p. 96.

87 Pictorial representations and *jinmyōchō* of the *sanjūbanjin* spread in the Nanbokuchō period (1336–92), and painted mandalas became the most common type of representation of these gods in the Hokke school. On the other hand, there are no examples of wooden statues of the thirty kami earlier than the sixteenth century. These data from existent material seem to contrast with the development of the iconography of the *sanjūbanjin* as outlined by Kusaba (1965), who sees a progression from the inscription of their names and the use of seed-letters (*shuji*) representing their *honji*, to sculptures and, finally, pictorial representations.

88 An early example is the so-called Honma mandala, kept at the Honma Museum of Art in Yamanashi, which includes seed-letters (*shuji*) of the *honji* of the thirty kami: Kageyama (1967), p. 64. There also is evidence of representations of the *sanjūbanjin* in *shuji* only, in a collection of *shinbutsu mandara* dated Kōji 3 (1557) which was found in a box of kami-related documents at Ninnaji: Kageyama (1962), p. 278. It would be interesting to compare this document with the Honma mandala because a first look at the *shuji* suggests that the *honji* used for each kami differed. Another important aspect of the iconography of the *sanjūbanjin* that emerges from these icons is the changing arrangement of the deities. For a discussion see Fukuda (1982), pp. 107–14 and 119–21.

89 Two examples from the early sixteenth century illustrate the most common patterns of representation. The first is a mandala dated 1511, consecrated by Hōshōin Nichijun (?–1521) of



Figure 9.2 Mandala of the Lotus depicting Kishimojin at the centre and the *sanūbanjin* at the bottom of the icon (colour on silk, 109.3 × 53.8 cm). Dated 1511 (Eishō 8), it bears the *kaō* of Hōshōin Nichijun (?–1521). The painting is owned by Jitsujōji, Aichi prefecture, and is kept at Nagoya Municipal Museum.

the bottom of the composition.[90] Sets of sculptures of the thirty gods, at times accompanied by Kishimojin, were often donated to the temples by devotees and petitioners. Popular devotion to the *sanjūbanjin* seems to have grown fast, affecting even the architecture of Hokke complexes. The need for a dedicated space of worship, where also the statues of the *sanjūbanjin* could be placed, led to the construction of separate buildings for this purpose within the precincts of Hokke temples (*banjinsha* or *banjindō*).[91]

For what aims were the *sanjūbanjin* so assiduously venerated? The existence of several written oaths (*kishōmon*) addressed to the *sanjūbanjin* shows that, as tutelary deities, they were thought to act in cases in which the petitioner had by his actions violated a promise he had made.[92] Tablets (*fuda*) with the names of the thirty gods were used in requests for protection, release from illness or difficulties, and purification. Furthermore, the association of the thirty gods with Kishimojin and Shichimen, deities invoked as *honzon* in exorcist rituals (*kitō*), suggests that the *sanjūbanjin* were also venerated in this context. *Kitō* manuals still used in today's Nichirenshū for exorcism of spirits that cause diseases and suffering show that the *sanjūbanjin* were classified among the gods to invoke against curses and against spirits of the dead. The manuals state that if a person in distress makes a pledge to them, the *sanjūbanjin* will display their protective action. The *kitō* included litanies such as the following:

the Honkokuji in Kyoto, and owned by Jitsujōji, in Aichi prefecture (Figure 9.2). Here the sitting figures of the *sanjūbanjin* are lined up in two rows in the lower part of the mandala, at the two sides of Nichijun's *kaō*; Kishimojin is enshrined in a small shrine at the centre of the mandala; in the upper part of the icon the *daimoku* is inscribed, surrounded by the four bodhisattvas emerging from the earth, but the two main buddhas of the *Lotus Sutra*, Śākyamuni and Prabhūtaratna, are not included: Miyazaki (1985), pp. 303 and 312. The second is a mandala dated 1549, consecrated by the fourteenth abbot of the Honkokuji, Renkōin Nichijo and now owned by the Hokkeji in Gifu. Here the *sanjūbanjin* occupy more than half of the icon, distributed in five rows in its lower section. In the upper part the *daimoku* with the group of the two buddhas and the four bodhisattvas is depicted, but at the centre of the icon one again finds Kishimojin and the ten female demons (*rasetsu*) who in the Dhāraṇī chapter of the *Lotus Sutra* pledge to protect the devotee of the Lotus: Miyazaki (1985), p. 346.

90 An image from the mid-Edo period in the possession of the Imabari Hokkeji in Ehime prefecture exemplifies this pattern: the sitting figures of the *sanjūbanjin* are distributed in six rows, while Kishimojin and Shichimen are drawn at the bottom of the icon. Miyazaki 1985, p. 346.

91 The oldest example of a *banjindō*, which survives as an important cultural property, is at the Myōrenji in Okayama prefecture. It consists of three small shrines, and was built in the Meiō period (1492–1501), when also the debate between Kanetomo and the Hokke school took place. NJ, p. 1114.

92 Cf., for instance, *Ryūge hishō*, NSZ 19, pp. 74–5, 77, and 86. In these documents the *sanjūbanjin* are listed as a set together with the "three treasures in the *Lotus Sutra*," the ten female demons and the various generations of high priests of the school, including Nichiren. For an analysis of the use of kami in medieval *kishōmon*, see Satō's chapter in this volume.

> If it is a disease suffered on day one [of the month], the protection of the Atsuta Daimyōjin immediately extinguishes this disease;
> If it is a disease contracted on day two, the protection of Suwa Daimyōjin makes curses and harm return to their original source and their original abode;
> If it is a disease contracted on day three, the protection of Hirota Daimyōjin quickly helps the sufferer;
> If it is a disease contracted on day four, the protection of Kehi Daimyōjin extinguishes illness and prolongs life;
> If it is a disease that occurs on day five, the protection of Keta Daimyōjin brings safety and long life;
> If it is a disease that occurs on day six, the protection of Kashima Daimyōjin cures it quickly;
> If it is a disease that occurs on day seven, the protection of Kitano Daimyōjin cures the disease and assures the realisation of one's earnest wishes;
> If it is a disease that occurs on day eight, the protection of Ebumi Daimyōjin eliminates diseases and difficulties;
> If on day nine an evil kami (*jashin*) comes, Kifune Daimyōjin reveals his great divine powers and makes the evil spirit return to its original abode;
> If it is a disease that occurs on day ten, Amaterasu Ōmikami adds her protection, subjugates the evil spirits and ensures the immediate extinction of the disease;
> If it is a disease contracted on day eleven, the protection of Hachiman Daibosatsu cures the disease and makes life long-lasting.

and so on until the last day of the month.[93]

The demise of Hokke Shinto

Like other Buddhist kami traditions, the worship of the *sanjūbanjin* was strongly affected by the prohibition of combinatory cults that occurred after the Meiji Restoration. The Hokke school was the object of specific decrees of the Meiji government, in particular because of the inclusion of two major imperial kami, Amaterasu and Hachiman, in its *honzon*.[94] It was ordered to

93 From a collection of *kitō* transmissions in five volumes kept at the Honshōji in Kanagawa prefecture (one of the centres of the modern revival of *kitō* in Nichirenshū), cited in Miyagawa (1986), pp. 273–5. There are five basic categories of such rituals (*himyō godan*), following the taxonomy of entities against which they are used: the spirits of the dead, the spirits of living people, foxes, gods who cause epidemics, and curses. Many documents related to the use of the *sanjūbanjin* in *kitō* rituals are collected in Miyazaki (1980).

94 Annaka (1996), p. 128 asserts that the Hokke school was the only denomination targeted by name in government edicts concerning the separation of kami and buddhas.

erase the names of these two kami from all existing mandalas, and it was also prohibited to use burial shrouds (*kyōkatabira*) on which a mandala was drawn, because they polluted Amaterasu and Hachiman by bringing them into contact with death. The Meiji government also issued various prohibitions concerning the worship of the *sanjūbanjin*. An edict of 1868 (Meiji 1)/10/18 sent to forty-two Hokke head temples (*honzan*) specifically forbade "invoking the names of the *sanjūbanjin* and enshrining [their images], starting with Amaterasu"; it also prohibited writing their names in the mandalas.[95] Another notification banning the "mixed use" (*kon'yō*) of the names of the *sanjūbanjin* was sent separately on the same day to the sixteen major temples of the Hokke school in Kyoto, including Myōrenji and Honkokuji.[96] This indicates the concern of the Meiji ideologues with the popularity of the worship of the *sanjūbanjin*, and attests to the fact that their cult was still particularly conspicuous in the Kinai area. Scholars have remarked that it was not only the veneration of kami under Buddhist names and appearances that preoccupied the new government, but also the view of the kami that underlay this form of worship. The *sanjūbanjin* were presented as *suijaku* of the buddhas; moreover, the imperial kami considered representative of the Japanese state, Amaterasu and Hachiman, were not given any special status within the set.[97] The Hokke leadership transmitted the orders from the government to the branch temples. However, it also instructed them to hide ritual items that bore the name of Amaterasu, rather than to destroy them. Documents speak of "keeping closed the doors of the place where the icons of the *sanjūbanjin* are enshrined," and of "putting away the registers of the dead (*kakochō*) that included their names," revealing that, like in other cases of *shinbutsu shūgō*, attempts were made to preserve objects of worship.[98] In some cases, the icons of the *sanjūbanjin* were moved to the halls of other protective deities of the Hokke school within the same temple precincts, such as Daikokuten or Kishimojin shrines. Many of the shrines for the *sanjūbanjin* survived under a different name, or under the name of one of the thirty kami.[99]

The ban completely transformed the rite itself. Not only could the *sanjūbanjin* no longer be invoked, but the construction of the ritual space where the *kitō* were performed had to change. The *shimenawa* that marked the sacred area and protected the officiant during rituals could no longer be

95 *Meiji ishin shinbutsu bunri shiryō* 1, p. 85, cited in Ishikawa (1996), p. 24 and Annaka (1996), pp. 126–7.

96 *Meiji ishin shinbutsu bunri shiryō* 5, p. 1111, cited in Annaka (1996), p. 128 and Ishikawa (1996), p. 22.

97 Ishikawa (1996), pp. 22–3.

98 Ibid., pp. 24–5.

99 Sonoda (1966a) cites a number of cases in the suburbs of Tokyo where the *banjindō* officially became Tenjinsha (shrines devoted to Sugawara no Michizane), or Suwa or Kitano shrines, and yet continued to be known among the locals as *banjin sama.*

used; the thirty kami were replaced by various other sets of deities, either the eight kami of the four directions ("the kami who protect heaven and earth"), the thirty-two kami of the Yoshida tradition, or, more commonly, the twenty-eight celestial mansions, which continued to be called *sanjūbanjin* even if they were no longer thirty. As a consequence of the policies of the Meiji Restoration, the importance of the worship of the *sanjūbanjin* diminished substantially. Today they occupy the last place among the protective gods of the Nichirenshū.[100]

Conclusion

The formulation of a Hokke discourse on kami was a response to politico-religious concerns of this emerging Buddhist school, and part of its strategy to define the place of the Hokke community in the religious panorama of medieval Japan. The beginnings of Hokke Shinto were shaped by its interaction with the Yoshida, a relationship which consisted of exchanges of people and knowledge, debates, and alliances, and which produced new readings of the meaning and the function of the kami.

The flourishing of Hokke Shinto literature in the sixteenth century attests to the expansion and diversity of the *honji suijaku* pattern in the early modern period. The new interpretations of the world of the kami served both shrines and temples: on the one hand, they popularised kami-related matters in the circles of Buddhist clerics and their followers; on the other hand, they crystallised the specific interpretations of the Hokke school vis-à-vis other traditions, Buddhist or not, and, eventually, the doctrinal positions of the various Hokke lineages. On a doctrinal and linguistic level, the Hokke discourse on the kami was clearly embedded in the medieval culture of associations and combinations, and used patterns elaborated in earlier writings of the Hokke school. At the same time, however, it incorporated notions of the sacred nature of the country of Japan and of the importance of some of its kami as they were being reformulated by other traditions. The writings of Hokke Shinto reveal that old knowledge about the kami was enriched by new interpretations, in response to and in interaction with the contemporary intellectual context, and that "Shinto," the comprehensive name that was given to this knowledge, became an integral component of Buddhist discourse.

On a ritual level, the *sanjūbanjin*, the original core of Hokke Shinto, were

100 See Miyagawa (1986), p. 277, which includes a comparative chart of protective gods venerated by the Nichirenshū. However, the name of the *sanjūbanjin* is still written every day, together with the *daimoku*, on the register of the dead kept in the main hall of temples: each day bears the name of the *banjin* of that day of the month. The thirty-first day, which came into use after the introduction of the solar calendar, is allocated to the "five protective gods of the *Lotus Sutra*" (two bodhisattvas, two Heavenly Kings and the group of Kishimojin and the ten female demons). Ara (1997), p. 93.

adapted to the liturgical life of the Hokke temples and associated with other deities who fulfilled protective functions. Eventually it was their use in prayers for practical benefits and in exorcist and apotropaic rites that helped popularise the worship of the thirty deities beyond the Kyoto communities, and beyond the restricted circles of learned scholar-monks.

10

HONJI SUIJAKU AT WORK

Religion, economics, and ideology in pre-modern Japan*

Fabio Rambelli

This chapter discusses the symbolic role of *honji suijaku* discourse in the fields of ideology, economics, and social practices in medieval and early modern Japan by analyzing two different bodies of documents containing religious information on work tools and rituals for professionals and aspects of everyday life. The first body of documents is constituted by the so-called *Akibito no makimono* ("The Scrolls of Itinerant Merchants"), a group of texts describing myths and legends concerning the origin of itinerant merchants (*akibito*) and their tools.[1] Some of these texts appeared in the fifteenth century, but most of them were written toward the end of the Muromachi period (mid-sixteenth century). Their authors were probably Kumano *yamabushi*. As several scholars have pointed out, the narrative parts of these texts are examples of *honjimono*, a literary genre of the Muromachi period about the sacred origins of people, things, places, or events. Even though these narratives have little or no historical value, they are nevertheless very important for our understanding of the mentalities of the people who wrote and used them.[2] The second body of documents I discuss is a number of

* Earlier, and increasingly longer, versions of this chapter were presented at meetings of the Society for Tantric Studies, Flagstaff, October 1997, the Association for Asian Studies, Washington, March 1998, the International Shintō Workshop, Columbia University, March 1999, the American Academy of Religion, Boston, November 1999, the European Association of Japanese Studies, Lahti (Finland), August 2000, and at a workshop I held at the Stanford Center for Buddhist Studies, Stanford University, March 2001. I am particularly grateful to Allan Grapard, Mark Teeuwen, Jackie Stone, Jim Sanford, Bernard Faure, Tanaka Yūbun, and all those who helped me with their encouragement, suggestions, and criticism.

1 The term *akibito* was used to define itinerant traders, as opposed to *chōnin* which referred to merchants living in cities, even though a more inclusive usage of the term existed. See Ishii Susumu (1998), pp. 4–5.

2 Hisano Toshihiko classifies eight different kinds of "merchants' scrolls": see Hisano Toshihiko (1998), p. 47. The most important ones are the following: *Hakari no honji*, in

ritual procedures for work and everyday practices produced by the Miwa shrine-temple complex in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[3] They contain instructions concerning the ritualization of labor and everyday practices. In spite of their late composition, these documents seem to be the crystallization of earlier visions of sacrality, in particular concerning the relations between the profane world and the sacred realm of buddhas and kami. I give particular attention to the rites for carpenters, many of whose texts survive, for they can give us a fairly good idea of the general outlook of such ritual labor practices.

Despite their differences, both sets of documents, the merchants' scrolls and Miwa ritual procedures, show a sophisticated combination of "Buddhist" and "Shintō" elements, especially in their attributing a sacred essence (*honji*) to professional tools, and in their theories about labor, which is envisioned as a collaboration of humans and deities with an ultimate soteriologic goal. These documents are a very concrete and graphic example of the quotidian operation of the *honji suijaku* logic, which turned labor and many aspects of everyday life into a ritual activity. *Honji suijaku* logic operates in many ways in these texts. For example, instructions concerning labor practices, rituals, and so forth are often defined as *daiji*, literally "important matters," a term that appears in doctrinal texts and ritual procedures of esoteric Buddhism and Shugendō with the meaning of "secret instructions." These instructions were handed down in the form of *kirigami* (secret paper strips) or *hiden* (secret oral transmissions), much like esoteric Buddhist teachings.

two rather different versions, respectively dated by Tokue Gensei to the end of the Muromachi period and the beginning of the Edo period (Tokue Gensei, 1994, pp. 67–77). The later version, supposedly a transcription of "various discourses by Lord Chōmei, resident in Unno, Shiratori manor, Ogata district, Shinano province," includes narratives concerning the origin of the scale (*hakari*), the *renjaku* rope, and the merchants themselves; it also contains instructions on the merchants' procedures and behavior (*sahō*) and rules to be respected in the market place. Chōmei was one of the four servants of Kumano Gongen to whom the text attributes the origin of the merchants; it probably refers to the head of the Chōmei household in Unno, near present day Ueda town, the center of a group of late medieval-early modern itinerant merchants. Another document, entitled "Origin of *renjaku* merchants" (*Renjaku akibito no yuraisho*), is dated 1444 (Bun'an 1). If this is true, this is the first known text on the subject. Another source, "Important instructions on *renjaku*" (*Renjaku no daiji*) is dated 1621 (Genna 7) and comes from the Aizu region in north-eastern Japan. All these documents contain narrations on the origin of the scale, of the *renjaku* rope, and the merchants, together with instructions on their behavior; some texts, however, contain references to En no Gyōja, a lineage of the four main merchant households, the origin of Ebisu, the god of the merchants, information on the merchants' guild. On these texts, see Ishii Susumu (1998), pp. 5–7. Apparently, these documents were written when the itinerant merchants were rapidly losing their prosperity, as ways to legitimize their rights (ibid., p. 8).

3 Miwa Shrine in today's Nara prefecture is one of the oldest cultic sites in Japan. Until the anti-Buddhist persecutions in the early Meiji period, Miwa shrine was controlled by a Buddhist temple, the Byōdōji, now almost completely destroyed, which was the center of one of the thirty-six traditional branches of the Shingon school of esoteric Buddhism.

Some ritual manuals end with the sentence: "The above collection of rituals should not be transmitted [to outsiders] even for one thousand gold [coins]. It must be kept secret."[4] This is a formula also found in esoteric initiatory documents.[5] All this indicates the importance of esoteric Buddhism (*mikkyō*) as a communicative model, a paradigm for instruction processes, and a mechanism to generate symbolic power based on religious imagery throughout pre-modern Japan.

By means of a creative use of *honji suijaku* logic, religious institutions thus attempted to control everyday activities, and productive activities in particular – at least, in symbolic terms in the realms of mythical narratives and ritual procedures – by explaining such activities as the intervention of *honji suijaku* combinatory deities. We can identify four different areas in such general sacralization of the everyday: (i) professional categories traced their history back to a *honji suijaku* combinatory deity; (ii) professional tools were considered sacred objects, created by some founding hero or deity (in many cases, they were envisioned as mandalas); (iii) labor was treated as a sort of religious performance; (iv) everyday practices were also sacralized and presented as forms of interaction between humans and the esoteric invisible world of *honji suijaku* deities. In this chapter I will discuss each of these areas in detail. I will then sketch an outline of the historical development of the discourse concerning the sacralization of tools and labor, including the early modern Nativist appropriation of such discourse and its lasting effects in contemporary Japan. I envision this chapter as an exploration of some micropolitical effects of Japanese religions, a theme I will address in the concluding section.

Origin myths of professional categories

Trades and crafts professionals of pre-modern Japan used to trace their history back to mythological space and time by producing narratives that were heavily influenced by the *honji suijaku* discourse. Many of these narratives in fact belong to the genre known as *honjimono* (narratives of sacred origins), directly related to accounts of the origins of a deity or a sacred place (*engi*).

Merchants

Origin narratives of itinerant merchants known as *renjaku* and *akibito* (or *akindo*)[6] describe mythical events taking place not only in Japan, but also

4 *Miwa shogan jōju sho daiji*, in *Ōmiwa jinja shiryō*, vol. 5, p. 44.

5 See Jacqueline I. Stone (1999), esp. pp. 144–5.

6 For an overview of the image of the itinerant merchants as it appears in medieval literature and performing arts (*nō*, *kyōgen*, *otogizōshi*, *sekkyōbushi*, etc.), see Tokue Gensei (1998). For some representations of market places and merchants in *kyōgen*, see Hashimoto Asao (1998). For visual representations of itinerant merchants, see Fukushima Toshio (1998).

in China and India. What follows is a synopsis of a typical story as it appears in an Edo period version of the *Hakari no honji* ("The Origins of the Scale").[7] The King of Khitan (a region bordering on present-day North Korea) in Great Tang accumulated religious merit and was reborn as a wealthy man in India. He rigorously kept the precepts and was thus reborn seven times as the King of Magadha. The seventh time he went to Japan with a retinue of twenty-eight people. In Japan, he chose as his abode Kumano in the land of Kii and became Kumano Gongen, the main deity of the region. His retinue became *yamabushi*, and four among them became merchants.[8] According to another text, this latter event happened during the reign of Emperor Keikō, the father of Yamato Takeru, during a mythical time.[9]

Several points in this narrative are particularly striking to a modern interpreter: the transnational origin of the merchants, going back to Kumano Gongen and his retinue; the connection between religion, ethical behavior, wealth, and power; the karmic interchange between merchants and kings; and the sacred nature of commerce and its relation to the *yamabushi*.[10] The influence of Kumano Shugendō in these texts seems particularly strong;[11] in fact, it is possible that Shugendō practitioners were responsible for most instances of sacralization of labor and everyday practices I discuss in this chapter, as we will see below.

Another text of the same repertory, the *Shōka koki* ("Ancient Records of Merchants"), includes, after the origin myth of merchants, also that of Ebisu,

7 *Hakari no honji*, A version, in Kokuritsu Rekishi Minzoku Hakubutsukan (ed.) (1998), pp. 181–97; rendition in modern Japanese, ibid., pp. 204–11. See also Tokue Gensei (1994).

8 The four members of Kumano Gongen turned merchants are, respectively, Lord Asama, Lord Chōmei, Lord Futto, and Lord Nonokawa. They opened the first market place in Miwa, and established their residences, respectively, in Ise, Iga, Settsu, and Yamato. See *Hakari no honji*, A version, ibid., pp. 189–92 (modern Japanese version pp. 207–8). According to Hisano Toshihiko, Asama refers to Asamagatake, a mountain immediately behind the Ise Inner Shrine: Lord Asama would thus represent merchants from Ise. Nonokawa or Nunokawa could refer to a group of *renjaku* merchants from the Ōmi region in present Shiga prefecture. Chōmei could refer to merchants from Shinano (Ishii, 1998). Futto could be a reference to Futto trading post in Hitachi province (present-day Ibaraki prefecture): see Hisano Toshihiko (1998), p. 49. Interestingly, a certain Chōmei is considered the author of the *Hakari no honji*.

9 *Renjaku no daiji*, in Kokuritsu Rekishi Minzoku Hakubutsukan (ed.) (1998), p. 234.

10 Hisano Toshihiko notes that most texts of this kind trace the history of itinerant merchants back to Kumano (some to Ise); this is a proof of the economic presence of Kumano *yamabushi* in large parts of Japan towards the sixteenth century (Hisano, 1998, p. 45).

11 In this respect, it is interesting to note that the *Shōka koki* ("Ancient Records of Merchants") adds to the mythical narrative I summarized above the genealogy of En no Gyōja, traditionally considered the founder of Shugendō; the genealogy of the aforementioned four merchant families; and information on a merchant guild from Kōfu in central Japan: see Kokuritsu Rekishi Minzoku Hakubutsukan (ed.) (1998), pp. 212–28. In this way, texts of pre-modern Japanese merchants employ mythico-historical narratives (of which genealogy is just a category) to draw a direct connection between the gods and a specific household.

the protector deity of merchants. Ebisu adds further complexity to the symbolism of merchants and their activities. References to him appear in several other texts, in particular the Miwa corpus of ritual instructions for professionals. The god Ebisu is identified by the *Shōka koki* with the leech-child (Hiruko) generated by Izanagi and Izanami because of a breach in the ritual protocols of sexual intercourse regulating the roles of Yin and Yang, as described in the *Kojiki* and the *Nihon shoki*.[12] The legend has the leech-child, abandoned in the sea, drifting until it arrived at the beach of Nishinomiya in present-day Kōbe, now the site of an important shrine dedicated to Ebisu. Another text stresses that, since the time of Emperor Jinmu, Ebisu is the god of wealth. Shōtoku Taishi made him the god of market places when he established the first market.[13] In other words, Ebisu, a deity who was born "defective" as a result of a ritual violation affecting the cosmic order as it is represented in sexuality and procreation, became the protector of wealth and the market place. This is perhaps a symbolic indication of the essentially aberrant nature of wealth in pre-modern medieval mentalities; in fact, narratives usually describe wealth as the result of divine intervention generating a surplus. In addition Ebisu, especially in his connection to his alter ego Daikokuten, could have also played a mediating role in the establishment of ideas of sacrality of professional tools and their religious rituals.

Carpenters

Carpenters traced their origins back to ancient Japanese myths. Some Miwa texts identify the progenitor of carpenters in Futodama no Mikoto, the ancestor of the Inbe clan. According to the *Kojiki*, Futodama, together with two servant gods, Taokihoohi no Mikoto and Hikosashiri no Mikoto, constructed a building and collaborated in producing ritual objects on the occasion of the ritual organized to lure Amaterasu out of her heavenly cavern (Ama no iwato), where she was hiding tired of Susanoo's disruptions of the heavenly order.[14] In one version in the Miwa texts, Taokihoohi no Mikoto and Hikosashiri no Mikoto were grandchildren of Futodama no Mikoto. According to another version, these two gods were instead brothers of Futodama no Mikoto and children of Izanami.[15] In any case, among their grandchildren there were two gods, named respectively Daijin and Kujin, who helped Emperor Jinmu when he built the first edifice in Japan. The texts indicate that, in fact, before Jinmu's arrival, the people living in the Japanese

12 *Kojiki*, in NKBT 1, p. 55; *Nihon shoki*, in NKBT 67, p. 82.

13 *Shintō Miwa genryū shintō kuketsu*, fasc. 1, in *Ōmiwa jinja shiryō*, vol. 6, pp. 154–5.

14 *Kojiki*, in NKBT 1, p. 81; *Nihon shoki* in NKBT 67 p. 112. The myth of the heavenly cavern was particularly important in pre-modern Japan as a central theme in the developing "Shintō" discourse, in which it was employed as a metaphor for Buddha-nature and kami-nature.

15 *Shintō Miwa genryū shintō kuketsu*, fasc. 1, in *Ōmiwa jinja shiryō*, vol. 6, pp. 174–5.

archipelago dwelt in trees or in holes in the ground.[16] The first characters of the names of the gods Daijin and Kujin were subsequently combined together to form the word *daiku* (carpenter). The descendants of these two gods were called Banjin and Shōjin; again, the first characters of the respective names were united to form the term *banshō* (another kind of carpenter). This is, according to documents from Miwa, the mythological origin of carpenters (*daiku* and *banshō*). This narrative legitimized the profession and their adepts as descendants of gods who had first helped bring Amaterasu back to this world, and later had helped the first emperor, Jinmu, in his civilizing effort, namely, the construction of edifices. In addition, as one text emphasizes, *daiku* and *banshō* are originally not separate, as descendants of the same gods in the same lineage; this was perhaps an invitation to work well together and to tone down professional rivalries.[17]

Other carpenters' guilds had different and very imaginative origin narratives. The Kiko house of imperial carpenters, active in the imperial palace until the end of the Muromachi period, handed down the following story. A carpenter from Hida in central Japan had built animated puppets that looked exactly like men; an imperial lady fell in love with one of them. From their union a baby was born, called Kiko ("son of the tree").[18] This story closely resembles origin narratives of *hinin*, discriminated groups in pre-modern Japan. According to one such story, the famed court magician Abe no Seimei had made some puppets for ritual purposes; when he did not need them anymore, he threw them into the Kamo river. However, the puppets turned into men; they had intercourse with real women, and their children were called *hinin* ("non-humans"). In another version, a carpenter from Hida, master Takeda, had made puppets to help him with his work. A court lady fell in love with one of them and bore a child – again a *hinin*.[19] An interesting feature of these stories is the interchangeability of Abe no Seimei, a famous *onmyōji*, and carpenters, in their capacity to transform inanimate material (wood) into human forms (puppets) and finally into human beings. There is a symbolic continuity between magic and carpentry, as there was between deities and merchants in the previous narratives.

16 Interestingly, the Miwa texts also point out that the first Buddhist temple was built subsequently to early imperial architecture: according to them, the first temple, the Shitennōji, was built in Japan by Emperor Yōmei.

17 For accounts of the mythical origin of carpenters, see *Miwa shogan jōju sho daiji*, in *Ōmiwa jinja shiryō*, vol. 5, pp. 41–2; *Shintō Miwa genryū shintō kuketsu* 1, in ibid., vol. 6, pp. 174–5. As a side note, this latter text states that the ancestral gods of carpenters, Daijin and Kujin, are descendants of Ame no Koyane.

18 *Jinten ainōshō*, fasc. 5, no. 33 "Kiko no daiku no koto," in DNBZ, vol. 150, pp. 124–6.

19 *Kobayashi Shinnosuke shibai kuji hikae*, early Edo period. Quoted in Komatsu Kazuhiko and Naitō Masatoshi (1985), pp. 154–5.

Other professional categories

Itinerant puppeteers (*kairaishi* or *kugutsu*), who were also active as merchants, also had their own original narratives going back to China. Even prostitutes – in the medieval Japanese imaginary theirs was regarded as a fully fledged profession – were envisioned by some authors as manifestations of Kannon.[20] Needle makers traced the origin of their trade, and their category, to Shōtoku Taishi's older sister. The Regent expelled her from the court because she was physically impaired, but before that he taught her how to make needles so she could have a profession.[21]

Common features to these narratives are: the mythical origin of a trade and its professionals, going back to a deity or a semi-divine figure, such as Kumano Gongen, Abe no Seimei, or Shōtoku Taishi; and the connections between sacredness and work, between a profession and the imperial court – or kingship in general, and between at least certain professions and discriminated groups (social marginality). In other words, these narratives testify to a circuit connecting kingship, arts and crafts, and marginality – a theme that has been studied in depth by Amino Yoshihiko.[22] On the one hand, the quasi-magical elements inherent in professions made them the object of contempt and discrimination in a process that began in the fourteenth century.[23] On the other hand, professionals responded by producing narratives that emphasized the sacrality of their lineage and their activities.

The sacredness of professional tools

As I mentioned above, professional tools were considered sacred objects in pre-modern Japan. Stories reported that they had been created by some founding hero or deity, usually in a process that began in India and developed in China, as in the origin myth of the merchant's scale. Often, tools were treated as manifest traces (*suijaku*) of deities that constituted the tools' original form (*honji*). Some tools were treated as mandalas: particularly significant in this respect are the *renjaku* rope that secures the container known as *sendabitsu* to the shoulders of the itinerant merchant, and the scale (*hakari*); a similar case is that of the *shakuhachi* flute played by the *komusō* monks of the Zen Fuke sect.[24]

20 Michele Marra (1993), esp. pp. 87–95; Amino Yoshihiko (1994).

21 In *Keichō kenmonshū*, an Edo text referring to a document of the Kamakura period, quoted in Amino Yoshihiko (1998), p. 164.

22 See, for example, Amino Yoshihiko (1984), p. 164.

23 On the quasi-magical elements in arts and crafts, see Nakazawa Shin'ichi (1988), esp. pp. 18–27, 57–66.

24 For descriptions and explanations concerning the various professional tools, see Mae Hisao (1983); on carpenter's tools from a historical perspective, see also Muramatsu Teijirō

*Tools as "manifest traces" (***suijaku***)*

Documents from the Miwa shrine-temple list numerous tools, even though not all are attributed with an original essence (*honji*). Here are some examples of the essences of some professional tools (the name of the tool is followed by its *honji*). Among the carpenter's tools,

ruler (*shakujō*): Fudō[25]
chisel (*nomi*): Jizō,[26] Śākyamuni[27]
metal hammer (*kanazuchi*): Aizen
plane (*kanna*): Jizō or Śākyamuni[28]
pure kanna (*kiyokanna*): Fudō
gimlet (*kiri*): Jūichimen Kannon
hatchet (*chōna*): none (but its ritual involves Kannon and Bishamonten)
ink ruler (*sumitsubo*): Dainichi[29]

Among the blacksmith's tools,

rasp (*yasuri*): Mañjuśrī
bellows (*fuigo*): Kokūzō
blacksmith's fire: Buddha Ratnasaṃbhava

Tools as mythological entities

The aforementioned *Akibito no makimono* ("The Scrolls of Itinerant Merchants") report in detail the mythical origins of the scale (*hakari*) and the *renjaku* rope, the most characteristic tools of the itinerant merchant.[30] According to such narratives, both tools appeared for the first time in India, were brought to China, and finally arrived in Japan.

The story of the scale contains many moral elements. A summary is as follows.[31] The great King Shibi of Central India was a very compassionate

(1973); for additional descriptions of traditional professions and their tools, see Yoshiba Kazuo (1998). For a splendidly illustrated introduction to carpenter's tools and rituals, see Kokuritsu Rekishi Minzoku Hakubutsukan (ed.) (1996). On *shakuhachi*, see note 47 below.

25 *Miwa shogan jōju shodaiji*, in *Ōmiwa jinja shiryō*, vol. 5, p. 38; *Miwa shintō genryūshū sen daiku kaji*, in ibid., p. 381.

26 *Miwa shintō genryūshū sen daiku kaji*, in ibid., p. 381.

27 *Shintō Miwa genryū shintō kuketsu* 1, in ibid., vol. 6, p. 171.

28 Ibid., p. 172.

29 Ibid., p. 171.

30 The *renjaku* is a rope used by itinerant merchants to secure to their shoulders the box containing their merchandise; this box is known as *sendabitsu*.

31 *Hakari no honji*, A version, in Kokuritsu Rekishi Minzoku Hakubutsukan (ed.) (1998), pp. 181–4; modern rendition in ibid., pp. 204–5.

man. In order to test him, the bodhisattva Fugen (Samantabhadra) and the god/bodhisattva Hachiman took the shape of, respectively, a pigeon and a hawk. The pigeon placed itself on the king's lap, while the hawk was staring at it waiting for a chance to capture it. The king took compassion on the pigeon. In order to induce the hawk to leave it alone, the king cut himself, put on a scale an amount of his own flesh equivalent to the weight of the pigeon and offered it to the hawk in compensation. At that point, the two birds disappeared, and when the king looked at his body, there was no trace of the injury he had inflicted upon himself. At this point, the narrative shifts to China, where the scale was subsequently established as a tool, at the time of the monk Shandao (613–81).[32] The scale came to represent Mount Sumeru and its cosmology. Finally, the scale was later brought to Japan by Gyōki (668–749). The first section of this story is obviously inspired by Jātaka Buddhist tales. This tale of self-sacrifice, one of the six superior virtues (*pāramitā*) of Buddhism, stresses compassion toward all sentient beings and disregard for one's own interest. It also legitimizes the merchant's activity as a way to promote Buddhist ideals, a theme that is further emphasized by the symbolism of Mount Sumeru. Its solidity and straightness are treated as metaphors for the character of the merchant, who should be honest and compassionate. Finally, the reference to Gyōki is perhaps an indication of the non-official nature of such mythical narratives. In any case, the presence of both Fugen and Hachiman is particularly significant.

The narratives concerning the *renjaku* rope are more confused and complicated, as is clear from the following summary. Once upon a time the asuras were upsetting the gods in India. Suddenly, two worms (*mushi*), four-and-a-half meters long (one *jō* and five *shaku*), appeared on Indra's altar (*Taishaku no dan*). Monju and Fugen saw that they represented Dainichi of the two realms. They asked: "What kind of animals are you?" The worms replied: "The energy of Indra's ascetic practices coagulated and turned into two worms – us." One worm was named Soshi, the other Hossu. Monju built an altar on the water of the Ganges River and performed austerities for seven days and seven nights. Eventually, Dainichi Nyorai appeared to him in the shape of a five-and-a-half meter (one *jō* eight *shaku*) rope that was called Dainichi's *honjaku* ("original *shaku*"). In India that rope was subsequently used by the Buddha. At this point, there follows a quite confused narration of events in India and in China at the time of Confucius. Suffice it to say here that there was also a phonetic and a functional transformation, since in China the rope was called *henjaku* and was used as a whip. Finally, the rope arrived in Japan, in the Kii province (where Kumano is located), as a rope binding a box containing the *Large Wisdom Sutra* (*Daihannyakyō*). In Japan, the *renjaku* is handed down by merchants (*akibito*).[33]

32 Shandao is one of the Pure Land patriarchs, and his function is not clear in this narrative.

33 *Hakari no honj*, A version, in Kokuritsu Rekishi Hakubutsukan (ed.) (1998) pp. 184–9; modern edition, in ibid., pp. 205–7.

In both narratives we observe a pervasive presence of religious themes, not necessarily well integrated with each other, and a systematic transformation of the religious into the secular – and vice versa. The implication is that tools are imbued with their sacred aura and ethical power.

Tools as intrinsically sacred entities (mandala)

Professional tools were not envisioned as mere representations of the sacred, the result of transformation processes going back to a mythical past. They were embodiments of the sacred, real presences of the *honji suijaku* pantheon. The scale had a veritable cosmology: it stood for Mount Sumeru, the four cardinal points, the realm (*tenka*), the sun, and the moon; the dots indicating the weight stood for stars and planets. Several deities resided in the scale: Dainichi, Amida, Kannon, Seishi, the sun, and the moon, the seven stars of the Big Dipper, and the twenty-eight lunar mansions – in an obvious relations with the star mandala (*hoshi mandara*) of esoteric Buddhism and Shugendō. Placing an object on the scale was a sacred action: the object being weighed was placed right at the center of the very mechanism of the sacred cosmos of Japanese religion.

The *renjaku* rope was associated, in addition to the Indian and Chinese elements I have already presented, with Japan's creation myth as an object originally attached to the heavenly halberd (*ama no sakahoko*) used by the gods to create Japan.[34] The *renjaku* was also conceived of as the symbolic object (*sanmaya*) of certain Buddhist deities, such as Kannon and Fudō, who use it to capture sentient beings and bring them to Buddhism. In addition, the *renjaku* also had a mandalic structure: the right knot was the Vajra mandala, the left one was the Womb mandala.[35] The two pieces of rope in front were the sun and the moon, and the two on the back were heaven and earth; the *renjaku* itself closely resembles the *kai no o*, the rope the *yamabushi* wrap around their waist when they climb the mountains to perform ascetic practices. Some texts also indicate correspondences between specific points in the rope and several five-element series (buddhas and their seed letters, colors, shapes, flavors, internal organs, etc.) quite common in esoteric Buddhism and Shugendō.

The association of some professional tools with the mandala, perhaps the most important sacred object of Japanese religion, should not come as a surprise. As a pervasive model of the sacred in pre-modern Japan, the mandala was strategically deployed in the materialistic cosmology of esoteric Buddhism, doctrines about the sacrality of inanimate things (*sōmoku jōbutsu*), and geopolitical definitions of the territory. A semiotics of representation

34 *Renjaku no daiji*, in ibid., p. 233; on the role of the halberd in medieval Japanese mythical discourse, see Yamamoto Hiroko (1998a).

35 *Shōka koki*, in Kokuritsu Rekishi Minzoku Hakubutsukan (ed.) (1998), p. 213.

involving a theory of hierophany that made the mandala the general model of the sacred, and stressed the continuity among Buddha images, ritual implements, and professional tools.

Agricultural tools were sacralized as well. For example, the sickle (*kama*) was envisioned as the divine body (*goshintai*) of Inari, but also as Benzaiten, the owner of the *mikura* (the warehouse containing one family's wealth);[36] a particular kind of plow (*karasuki*) was to be visualized as the one-pronged *vajra* (*dokko*) used in esoteric rituals.[37] Some texts even present work animals as embodiments of buddhas: for example, the horse was a manifestation of Batō Kannon, and the cow a manifestation of Dainichi. These texts were perhaps read aloud in rituals performed at the opening ceremonies for horse and cow markets.[38]

The use of the plow (*suki*) was to be preceded by the invocation: "heaven and earth have the same root; all things are of one substance"[39] – an invocation that turned the plow into a liturgical implement. The same happened with other tools that were envisioned as embodiments of morality, instruments for the construction of a perfect society. For example, of the scale it was said that it weighs good and evil; similar moral meaning was also associated with the measure (*masu*) and with the abacus (*soroban*).[40]

The market place was treated in pre-modern Japan as a sacred area, the concrete manifestation in time and space of esoteric Buddhism's *honji suijaku* cosmology, and as such it shares some of the features of professional tools I have been outlining. The market was also envisioned as a particular space free from worldly ties (*muen*), like the womb and the mountains. To emphasize its particular status, markets were usually held in liminal areas such as riverbanks, beaches, crossroads, village and town boundaries, and before temple gates.[41] An Edo period text, the *Renjaku no daiji*, presents a detailed map with descriptions of a market place set up by *yamabushi*.[42] Its cosmological, mandalic structure is clear. It is 360 *hiro* (about 650 meters) long, and this number represents the days of the year; it is 12 *hiro* (about 21 meters) wide, indicating the twelve months. The upper part is composed of forty-eight booths, expressing Amida's forty-eight vows; the twelve booths in the lower part indicate Yakushi's twelve vows. These two sections are marked by a *torii* gate; outside the lower *torii* there are a bath-house and a resting place (*tankawaya*). At the connecting point between the upper and the lower

36 See the rites for merchants and peasants in *Miwaryū shintō genryūshū kizeibu shoshoku shōnin nōnin bu shiso kan*, in *Ōmiwa jinja shiryō*, vol. 5, pp. 352–3.

37 *Shintō Miwa genryū shintō kuketsu* 1, in ibid., vol. 6, p. 155.

38 Tokue (1998), pp. 40–1.

39 *Miwaryū shintō genryūshū kizeibu shoshoku shōnin nōnin bu shiso kan*, in *Ōmiwa jinja shiryō*, vol. 5, p. 353.

40 *Shintō Miwa genryū shintō kuketsu* 1, in ibid., vol. 6.

41 See Amino Yoshihiko (1996).

42 *Renjaku no daiji*, in Kokuritsu Rekishi Minzoku Hakubutsukan (ed.) (1998), pp. 233–44.

sections there is a Buddha hall (Nakamidō). The text also lists twenty-one kinds of offerings to Sumiyoshi, the god of the market place, but there is no indication in the text of a special building dedicated to him. In other words, the *Renjaku no daiji* establishes a sacred hierarchy with Amida at the top, Yakushi in between, and Sumiyoshi Daimyōjin at the bottom; this is a reflection of the original essences (*honji*) of the two main shrines in Kumano. The *honji* of Hongū is in fact Amida, and that of Shingū is Yakushi.[43] Itō Masayoshi suggests that during the Edo period the sacredness of the market place, based on *honji suijaku* religiosity controlled by Shugendō, decreased; in some cases it was even openly denied. The feudal administrators tried to place economic activities under their control – especially the festive, carnivalistic manifestations that accompanied them in market place rituals. Street performers and clowns took the place of religious market performers. Whether that was a "quiet rebirth of medieval festive principles," as Itō suggests, or rather a form of secularization, is open to discussion.[44] The relationships that appear in these texts between merchants, their objects, and the *yamabushi* were not purely doctrinal: the *yamabushi* are known to have established market places, as in Aizu Takada, and to have read market prayers (*ichi no saimon*), as in Iwatsuki in Musashi province.[45]

The *shakuhachi* flute played by monks belonging to the Zen Fuke school can also be considered as a professional tool. The *shakuhachi* shared all the features of sacredness we have outlined thus far. Edo period texts reported that it had been transmitted across the Three Countries (India, China, and Japan); it was associated with Shōtoku Taishi and En no Gyōja (or, in other words, the official and unofficial sides of Japanese Buddhism). As a sacred instrument, to play it is like performing Zen meditation (*zazen*) in search for the "absolute sound" (*tetteion*); its sound caused the "deities of the mountains" to bestow their blessings upon the people – much like the performance of Zen rituals was believed to tame the dangerous aspects of the kami.[46] The *honji suijaku* model was also operative in the *shakuhachi*: while its front (*omote*) represents the buddhas (*honji*), its back (*ura*) represents the kami (*suijaku*). Interestingly, the *shakuhashi* was also figured as a mandala; in particular, its five holes were envisioned as the five buddhas, the five wisdoms (*gochi*), and the five directions in the central part of the mandala.[47]

43 See Itō Masayoshi (1998), esp. 121–7; see also *Renjaku no daiji*, in Kokuritsu Rekishi Minzoku Hakubutsukan (ed.) (1998), pp. 239–43.

44 On analogous transformations in European market places in the eighteenth century, see Peter Stallybrass and Allon White (1986).

45 Hisano (1998), p. 60.

46 On these subjects, see William Bodiford (1993) and (1993–4).

47 On these aspects of the Fuke *shakuhachi*, see Takahashi Kūzan (1979), esp. pp. 167–89. On *shakuhachi* music, see also Nakatsuka Chikuzen (1979); Fabio Rambelli (1989), pp. 27–34. On the Fuke school, see James H. Sanford (1977), pp. 411–40.

To sum up, sacredness of tools was essentially of two kinds: indirect, based on contact, as in the case of creation by a deity, or direct, based on the intrinsic features of the tool, as in mandala or a divine body of a kami (*go-shintai*). Such sacralization of tools was based on the combinatory and correlative logic that dominated pre-modern Japanese epistemology: tools, their functions, myths related to those tools, deities associated with those myths were all connected following a sort of interpretive drift. As a result, all of those items came to constitute macro-semiotic entities in which distinctions between tool, deities, secular functions and sacred notions were explicitly and willingly eliminated. This logic led to the sacralization of work: the handling of sacred objects became necessarily a religious ritual that ought to be performed according to specific regulations.[48]

Labor as a religious performance

Miwa ritual documents treat labor as a sort of religious performance: each phase of work was equated, through mantras and mudras, to a salvific action producing either worldly benefits (*genze riyaku*) or enlightenment (or both), in accordance with the doctrines of esoteric Buddhism. Most rituals or ritual segments require in fact the chanting of mantras, the performance of mudras, the singing of secret songs to the kami; they also require oral instructions concerning details, such as the offerings to be prepared. Since the Japanese transliteration of the Siddhaṃ script is not indicated in the texts one assumes that there were also separate oral or written transmissions concerning the pronunciation of mantras, as well as separate instructions on hand gestures. Overall, the rituals present work and everyday practices as instances of the esoteric cosmology and soteriology, and give professionals (and, more generally, all people involved) a powerful cosmic role.

The Miwa documents contain rituals for a number of professions:

Blacksmiths (*kajiya no daiji*), with purification, mantras, invocations, etc.

Soldiers (*bushi*): rituals for various weapons (invocations to Hachiman are relatively numerous; other deities are Marishi, Dainichi, Kannon); rites to become invisible (based on Kannon and Aizen).[49]

Merchants: information about Ebisu (called here Hiruko); instructions on handling tools such as the scale (*hakari no daiji*), the measure (*masu*), and the abacus (*soroban*); rites to be loved by

48 This does not necessarily mean that actual carpenters or merchants thought that their work was "sacred" and that they were actually manipulating cosmic forces in their job, although this possibility cannot be dismissed. I will discuss this problem below.

49 *Miwaryū shintō buyū bu shin* (dated 1773, An'ei 2), in *Ōmiwa jinja shiryō*, vol. 5, p. 48.

> everyone,[50] for eliminating calamities, to avoid black magic (the latter are based on visualizations of emptiness, the lotus, and the pure mind,[51] and on the thought that "self and other are undifferentiated"),[52] and to avoid losses (visualize the universe with compassionate eyes and see infinite wealth everywhere).[53]
>
> Farmers: rituals concerning water, seeds, rice transplantation (*taue*), fertility and peace in the realm, successful harvest, etc.[54]
>
> Rituals for the medical profession (*idō*), medicines (*yakushu*), and physicians.[55]

In addition, there are ritual instructions for silk makers (*kinu shi*), dyers (*kon'ya*), Buddhist sculptors (*busshi*), stone cutters (with the visualization formula "when one buddha in his Pure Land looks at the Dharma realm he sees that plants and trees and the territory all become buddhas"), *biwa hōshi*, *koto* players, *onmyōji* diviners, and even *bakuchi* gamblers (who were advised to remember that increase in wealth is an indication of the glory of religious institutions).[56]

Carpenters

The most complete ritual instructions available to us today are those for carpenters developed by Miwa shrine. According to Hatta Yukio, there are a number of variants of a text dealing with the procedures in eighteen steps to be followed by carpenters, variously called *Shintō daiku jūhachitsū daiji injin*, *Shintō daiku jūhachitsū daiji-in*, *Ryōbu shintō daiku shodaiji*, and *Sanshiki densho*.[57] Copies of these texts have been found in the Hakusan area, on Kōyasan, and at the Miwa shrine-temple. They all contain mantras and at times brief religious explanations for each step of the carpentry. As Hatta notes, the numerous mistakes in the mantras suggest that the texts were copied by people who evidently did not know the Siddhaṃ script very well, probably Shugendō adepts.[58]

Ritual labor marked every phase of construction work. In a society where technology was not extremely developed, the construction of a building was

50 All the above in *Miwaryū shintō genryūshū kizeibu shoshoku shōnin nōnin bu shiso kan*, in ibid., especially pp. 352–5.

51 *Miwa shintō genryūshū shimin inshitsu kowarawa*, in ibid., p. 391.

52 *Shintō Miwa genryū shintō kuketsu* 1, in ibid., vol. 6, p. 159.

53 *Miwa shintō genryūshū shimin inshitsu kowarawa*, in ibid., vol. 5, p. 390.

54 *Miwaryū shintō genryūshū kizeibu shoshoku shōnin nōnin bu shiso kan*, in ibid., p. 353.

55 Ibid., respectively on pp. 353, 354, 355.

56 Ibid., all on pp. 354–6.

57 Hatta Yukio (1991), p. 207.

58 Ibid., pp. 207–8.

more difficult than we think today, especially if we consider the architectural magnificence of temples and shrines. The carpenters attempted to reduce the unpredictable outcomes of construction works by invoking help from the deities or by preventing them from doing harm. One underlying idea of these rituals is that any construction is a violation of the cosmic order (the sacrality of space and time), and atonements must be performed to restore the broken harmony. This is probably what enabled religious institutions to claim control over this kind of productive activity: in order to control and monopolize a productive activity, in fact, Buddhist and Shinto centers first had to show that there was an innately religious essence to it. Esoteric Buddhism, in particular in its Shinto and Shugendō forms, had all the conceptual and ritual instruments to provide carpentry and other professional activities with a cosmological and soteriologic foundation.[59]

Standard construction rites still performed in Japan today are modeled after those taking place at Ise shrine.[60] This ritual model appears to have become widespread since the mid-Edo period, with the development of anti-Buddhist attitudes and Nativist movements. However, well into the Edo period, Shinto shrines (or, more accurately, Shinto sections of combinatory temple-shrine complexes) were still performing construction rites with strong Buddhist influences. For example, wooden planks inscribed on the occasion of the 1776 restoration of the main hall of Sangō Hachiman shrine in present-day Wakayama prefecture carry mantric spells written in Siddhaṃ characters and Buddhist formulae.[61] Siddhaṃ characters can also be found inscribed on planks from Nangū Taisha in present-day Gifu prefecture dating to 1640–2.[62] Until the late Edo period, in fact, various carpenter guilds were still performing rituals based on traditional *honji suijaku* religiosity. A particularly interesting and well-documented case is Miwa carpenters' rites.

The ritual process of construction works

A typical construction ritual from the Miwa Shinto-Buddhist documents consists of the purification of the performer, the delimitation of the sacred space (*kekkai*) where the carpenters were to work, the summoning of deities to protect the carpenters, their work, and the people hiring them, additional specific rituals for each phase of construction, and a final celebration of the completion of the work, in which deities were asked to protect the building (and its household) for thousands of generations. Hatta Yukio suggests that these rituals were based on the set of esoteric Buddhist rituals known as

59 On some construction rituals of a stricter Shinto observance, from Ise shrine, see Mae Hisao (1983), pp. 177–84; see also Shimizu Keiichi (1996), pp. 134–8.

60 For an overview and study, see Itō Heisaemon (1973); see also Shimizu Keiichi (1996).

61 For illustrations, see Kokuritsu Rekishi Minzoku Hakubutsukan (ed.) (1996), pp. 76–7.

62 Ibid., p. 78.

Jūhachidō (Eighteen Paths).[63] What follows is a selection of Miwa rituals for carpenters:[64]

> Ritual upon entering the atelier (*koyairi no daiji*): deities involved are Kongōsatta, Śākyamuni, Yakushi, heaven and earth, sun and moon, Dainichi, and the kami.[65] First, the officiant purifies himself and protects himself against the contact with the divine by performing a ritual for the protection of the body (*goshinpō*), which culminates in his embodying Dainichi of the two realms. The ritual mainly consists of mantra chanting and a final invocation to the kami asking them to eliminate all impurities. The "original essence" (*honji*) of the atelier is Kongōsatta according to one text, and both Śākyamuni and Yakushi according to another;[66] either way, the *honji* imply wisdom, competence, and safety. Particularly important in this ritual is also the god Ame no Koyane. The labor of the carpenter is thereby presented as the activity of Dainichi and the pure work of the kami.
>
> Ritual of the toolbox (*shosaikubako*): the original essence is Śākyamuni, but the main deity involved is Amida. The ritual consists in performing Amida's mudra facing the atelier and chanting Amida's mantra (*Oṃ amṛta teje hara hūṃ*), and in a final invocation to all buddhas and bodhisattvas to grant all wishes in the present and future lives. The toolbox is identified with the treasure house of the buddhas and bodhisattvas, both in the sense of the Realm of Essence (Dharmadhātu) and of the Buddhist Canon, which fulfills the wishes of all sentient beings.[67]
>
> Another text calls this a Pacification ritual (*shizume no daiji*). In this variant, the *honji* of the toolbox is Amida. After performing Amida's mudra and chanting Amida's mantra, the officiant turns his face toward the atelier, traces with a finger (*atamayubi*) the Sanskrit sillable *hṛīḥ* (Amida's mantric seed), and recites a secret poem to the kami, whose content is approximately: "in accordance with the instructions from the kami, let us build the original imperial palace" (*chihayaburu kami no tsutae wo tsutaekitarite moto no miyako wo tsukuri tsukuramu*).[68]

63 On Jūhachidō see *Mikkyō daijiten*, pp. 889–90; Robert H. Sharf (2001).

64 This section is based on Hatta Yukio (1991), with additions from other Miwa ritual instructions when indicated.

65 *Miwa shintō genryūshū sen daiku kaji*, in *Ōmiwa jinja shiryō*, vol. 5, p. 381.

66 See, respectively, Hatta Yukio (1991); *Shintō Miwa genryū shintō kuketsu* 1, in *Ōmiwa jinja shiryō*, vol. 6, p. 171.

67 Hatta Yukio (1991).

68 *Miwa shogan jōju shodaiji*, in *Ōmiwa jinja shiryō*, vol. 5, p. 38.

Ritual for the beginning of work (*chōna hajime*): the original essence is Jūichimen Kannon, the main deity involved is Bishamonten. This ritual is dedicated to the hatchet (*chōna*), and takes place at the beginning of the year or at the inauguration of a new job site; it is focused on the hatchet, the tool used to cut trees – the very beginning of a carpenter's work. First, a sacred space (*kekkai*) is established: the inside is purified and protected from external evil influences; one's mind and attitude are purified and enlightened as a guaranty of good results. Mantras and mudras are performed. This ritual is further divided in several steps.

Ritual of the square rule (*sashigane*): the original essence is Amida; deities involved are Amida and the kami. The officiant performs and chants Amida's mudra and mantra, and draws with a finger Amida's seed syllable *hṛīḥ*; he then intones an invocation to the kami, saying that what is to begin is the construction of the original capital city, the original residence of Amida. Finally, he bows to the square rule. Here the square rule is understood as the key tool for construction, and the building itself is envisioned as Amida's palace.

Ritual of the marker (*sumisashi*):[69] the original essence is Monju. His presence is invoked through a mantra, then a verse is read: "the three worlds are myself; all sentient beings living in them are my children." The implication is that work is conducted with a cosmic awareness of the interrelation of all things, a sense of cosmic duty and responsibility for all one's actions.

Ritual of the ink ruler (*sumitsubo*):[70] the original essence is Dainichi. The officiant performs and chants mudras and mantras representing the two mandalic realms (the Womb and the Vajra). Then, pure water is put on the ink stone. One must visualize the water in the ink stone as the Lake without heat (Munetsuchi), i.e. the abode of the cosmic serpent Anavatapta (Anokudatta Ryūō) located at the center of the southern continent of Jambudvīpa. As Hatta Yukio explains, water represents the Womb realm and symbolizes compassion; ink represents the Vajra realm and symbolizes wisdom; the resulting liquid ink is the *ryōgon sanmai*, a contemplative state (*samādhi*) of complete unobstructedness. This was used to represent the undifferentiatedness of worker and his work, as a way to ensure that carpenters took their measurements with the highest precision.

69 I translate here as "marker" a special tool made of a piece of bamboo cut as a spatula; its thinner tip is used to draw marks on timber or stone.

70 The *sumitsubo* is a tool employed to draw straight lines.

We see here the use of religious and mystical images to encourage workers to precision and seriousness, a practice that is still present, albeit in different forms, in the training of contemporary Japanese workers. Finally the carpenters, both masters (*daiku*) and apprentices (*shōku*), ritually exchange cups of sake (*sansan kudo*) and begin drawing the lines.

Ritual of the big ruler (*shakujō*): original essence is Suiten, the Indian water god Varuṇa. The big ruler was associated with the kami ruling heaven and earth, and was also called Dragon King (*ryūō*), which is not surprising, given the traditional connection between dragons, water, and chtonian deities. When correctly used, the big ruler enabled one to properly place the foundation stone – the basis of any solid building. Laying the foundation stone was called *ryūbuse*, "subjugation of the dragon." It required a specific ritual, which was the subject of a secret initiation. This ritual implied control over the cosmos (on this occasion the carpenter chants a stanza by the Buddha: "I am the only venerable in heaven and earth"), over space and time (the carpenter in the ritual is particularly aware of the four directions associated to the four seasons), and over the chtonian deities (represented by the dragon; in the Hindu mythology, also referred to in Buddhist texts, the world is sustained by a dragon, and a dragon is supposed to live underneath the central pillar of every shrine). This ritual is a good example of the operation of the *honji suijaku* combinatory episteme and related interpretive practices: a tool (the big ruler), its function (laying the foundation stone), cosmological notions related to that function, myths related to that tool and its functions, and deities are all mobilized and restructured into a complex macro-sign.

Rituals of completion (*muneage to daiji*), celebrated in occasion of the completion of the roof of a shrine. Texts list the following segments: protection ritual (*goshinpō*); preparation and waving of the *gohei*, scattering of rice, presentation of offerings. The officiant chants mantras and intones invocation to the kami of heaven and earth, to Brahmā (Bonnō), Śiva (Jizaiten), and Amaterasu ōnkami, celebrating the union of heaven and earth, the pure light of sun and moon, and the Buddhist principle that plants and trees and the territory all become buddhas.[71] The sacred nature of the building is emphasized by the stanza: "Because of delusion, the three worlds

71 On this doctrine, and its relation with the construction of sacred buildings and images, see Rambelli (2001b).

72 *Miwa shogan jōju sho daiji*, in *Ōmiwa jinja shiryō*, vol. 5, pp. 40–1.

are a walled city; because of enlightenment, the ten directions are empty. Originally there is neither east nor west; how can there be north and south?" The ceremony closes with a final invocation to the kami.[72] An example of the invocations intoned in this ritual shows the inextricable interconnection of Indian, Chinese, and Japanese religious imagery:

> Hail to the heavenly deities Dharma kings
> Hail to the earthly deities Dharma kings
> Hail to Brahmā Dharma king
> Hail to Indra Dharma king
> Hail to Amaterasu ōnkami,
> Whose shrine is where heaven and earth are in harmony
> Sun and moon brightly shine, plants and trees
> And the territory all become buddhas
> All days are good [or, The sun is good?]
> All nights [or, stars?] are wise
> The buddhas are powerful
> The arhats have eliminated all impurities
> Because of these sincere and true words
> May this sacred hall be fortunate.

Ritual for the completion of a Buddhist temple: it differed from those for Shinto shrines, indicating an awareness of doctrinal and functional differences. However, it was a matter of a continuum of different forms of sacrality, rather than more essential and unbridgeable differences. Rituals for Buddhist edifices included offerings, rites for the purifications of the space, mantras and mudras to Dainichi of the two realms; an invocation to the three refuges, words of praise to Śākyamuni, the intoning of the verse quoted above emphasizing the cosmological nature of the building; other mantras, and a final invocation marked by the beat of the mallet:[73] "may this sound vibrate throughout the three times [past, present, and future] and make all beings become buddhas."[74]

The sacralization of everyday practices

Miwa ritual documents also sacralized everyday practices, thus presenting them as forms of interaction between humans and the invisible world of *honji suijaku* deities. Particularly important were instructions for women and children, as further indications of the symbolically marginal (and therefore

73 Beating the mallet is based on another ritual in three phases, the *muneage tsuchi-uchi no daiji*, emphasizing eternity, pacification, and the fulfillment of all wishes.

74 *Miwa shogan jōju shodaiji*, in ibid., p. 40.

potentially threatening) status of these two categories of people in pre-modern Japan.

The Miwa documents contain rites to atone for killing beings, probably referring to cooking; for the kitchen knife (*hōchō*), for eating fish and animals; for leaving one's house (*monshutsu no daiji*), for when a horse does not want to move, for wading a river, for travelling by boat,[75] for water, for the elimination of fires,[76] to avoid black magic, and for the elimination of house impurities caused by death.[77]

Some instructions were aimed specifically at women. The beauty case (*tebako*) is a major focus of ritual attention. The mirror is Amaterasu's divine body; the beauty case is Kashima Daimyōjin, the comb box is Aizen Myōō, the golden plate is Katori Daimyōjin, the golden brush is Sannō *suijaku*.[78] Other instructions concerned the red and white powders used in make-up,[79] the mirror, the custom of blackening the teeth; the sewing needle; easy childbirth, *obi* sash, kitchen tools, and the metal pot. In addition, there were rituals for difficult birth, the disposal of the placenta (*ena*); to become pregnant,[80] to make the baby sleep at night, to be loved by everyone, and to stop menstruation in occasion of visits to sacred places.[81] A ritual for the elimination of house impurities caused by women's menstruation consisted of chanting the mantras *raṃ* and *vaṃ* for purification and *hūṃ* to attain enlightenment, envisioned here as the realization that one's five elements (i.e. the woman's body) are the shapes of the five generations of kami, and that the five wisdoms and five buddhas are the kami (*shinmei*) – and therefore essentially pure.[82]

Sections on children include ritual instructions for the practice of writing (*tenarai*), for the ink stone (*suzuri*), the brush (*fude*), and to heal smallpox (*hōsō*).[83]

75 All in *Miwaryū shintō buyū bu shin*, in ibid., pp. 45–51.

76 *Miwa shintō genryūshū shimin inshitsu kowarawa*, in ibid., pp. 389–90.

77 *Shintō Miwa genryū shintō kuketsu* 1, in ibid., vol. 6, pp. 158–9.

78 *Miwa shintō genryūshū shimin inshitsu kowarawa*, in ibid., vol. 5, pp. 391–2.

79 The mantric seed of the red make-up powder is *hūṃ*, described as a fusion of *a* and *vaṃ*, i.e. the male and female principles. The text stresses the association with Kashima Daimyōjin who is the principle of the female, red, and the flesh of sentient beings. The white make-up powder is described as the divine body of Katori Daimyōjin, and the male principle (associated with the bones and the semen). There is also a reference to shrine architecture, in which white and red colors represent these two deities and their sexual and bodily associations. See *Miwa shintō genryūshū shimin inshitsu kowarawa*, in ibid., p. 392.

80 Ibid., pp. 392–5.

81 *Shintō Miwa genryū shintō kuketsu* 1, in ibid., vol. 6, p. 161. According to the *Miwa shintō genryūshū shimin inshitsu kowarawa* (in ibid., vol. 5, p. 394), this rite consisted of writing a magic formula, taking pills, and chanting mantras.

82 Ibid., p. 390.

83 Ibid., p. 396.

Sexuality is another area that was highly ritualized and subject to countless discussions during the Edo period. One text in particular, the *Sangai isshinki* by the Zen priest Dairyū, is especially interesting. It describes sex as a way to implement the Buddhist law of karma and rebirth and the kami's principle of production/reproduction. During sexual intercourse, the two cosmic principles (Yin and Yang) join, the five cosmic elements interact, and a baby is born – that is, a dead person is reincarnated. The *Sangai isshinki* operates a systematic correlation of the embryological phases of the fetus with the post-mortem process of becoming a buddha (*jōbutsu*), based on memorial rituals for the thirteen buddhas. In this way, sex was presented as essentially reproductive. Pleasure was not part of the picture; on the contrary, sexuality was another kind of labor, in which humans co-operated with the buddhas and the kami to increase population and productivity.[84]

For a history of the sacralization of tools and labor

The set of narratives, practices, and ideas I have discussed thus far developed over a long span of time (more than three centuries) and relatively late in the history of the *honji suijaku* paradigm. In addition, they do not appear to have been masterminded by some unified institution; on the contrary, they developed, apparently independently of each other, within numerous social groups in various parts of the Japanese archipelago. Shugendō constituted a possible common ground, but as an institution it was far from unified and systematic even during the Edo period. It is possible to argue, then, that these rituals and narratives sacralizing labor and everyday practices emerged within the *kenmitsu* episteme as the result of the convergence of a number of more or less independent factors, such as doctrinal developments, political and ideological decisions, folk traditions, social changes, and economic thought and practices. They do not even seem to have always been imposed from the top down; it is possible that in some cases, narratives and rituals concerning professional activities were an attempt by marginalized groups to establish their *raison d'être* by appropriating forms and models of dominant discourse – the same discourse that was at the basis of their very marginalization. In this section I will attempt to trace some threads in a possible genealogy of such narratives and rituals carrying out the sacralization of everyday life.

As we have already seen, documents on the sacralization of labor and professional tools appear in the late Muromachi period and circulate until the end of the Edo period, but possible precedents can be identified dating back to the Heian period.

84 Dairyū, *Sangai isshinki*, in Washio Junkei (ed.) (1930), pp. 503–40. For a discussion of this text, see James H. Sanford (1997), pp. 1–38.

Rituals for professions and their tools could have developed out of consecration ceremonies for ritual implements and religious objects such as buddha images. For example, the Dharma Prince Shukaku (1150–1202) describes already in the late Heian period the rituals accompanying the production of a buddha image out of a sacred tree,[85] rituals that could be at the origin of later rituals for carpenters such as the *chōna hajime*. Interestingly, tools such as the hatchet (*chōna*), the chisel (*nomi*), and the hammer (*tsuchi*) are actually mentioned by Prince Shukaku.[86] Other religious rituals that might have influenced the development of professional rituals I have outlined above are those performed for the consecration of sacred buildings such as temples (*dō kuyō*) and pagodas (*tō kuyō*), and funeral monuments. Those rituals display a strong connection between the labor of craftspeople and the invisible world of the deities. It is quite possible that professional rites for carpenters developed out of them.

Other rituals of a more quotidian nature were performed since the Heian period, such as those for easy and safe childbirth,[87] or to pacify babies who cry at night.[88] These rituals, with strong folkloric and Onmyōdō components, were probably at the basis of later everyday rituals for women and children.

The sacredness of certain professional tools could have been derived from symbolic objects representing buddhas and bodhisattvas, such as Fudō Myōō, Kannon, and especially Daikokuten and his alter ego, Ebisu, who hold hammers, merchant's bags, etc. In esoteric Buddhism, these symbolic objects (*samayagyō*) are alternate bodies of those deities, and as such they are endowed with magic and religious power. It is not difficult to see that power also present in other tools not directly connected with the deities. In addition, pre-modern Japanese culture attributed magic powers to some particular tools (especially swords): these tools had names often ending with the suffix *-maru*, in itself an indication of liminality between the sacred and the profane, and the human and the divine worlds.[89]

The sacredness of trades and crafts is probably related to more general cultural contexts. For example, a text composed in the late Kamakura period, the *Futsū shōdō shū* (1297), presents a detailed classification of arts and crafts (*geinō*), divided into two main categories: the profane (*seken*) and

85 Shukaku, *Hishō sahōshū*, in *Kokuyaku mikkyō*, Jisōbu 3. Tōkyō: Kokusho kankōkai, 1976, section "Misogi kaji sahō," pp. 128–9. See also "Misogi kaji" in *Sahōshū*, ed. by Seigen with additions by Henjin, in *Kokuyaku mikkyō*, Jisōbu 3. Tōkyō: Kokusho kankōkai, 1976, p. 455.

86 Shukaku, *Hishō sahōshū*, p. 129.

87 "Obi kaji": in *Sahōshū*, pp. 454–5.

88 "Shōji no yanaki no hō": in *Sahōshū*, p. 455. I am grateful to Tanaka Yūbun for drawing my attention to these rituals and for the references in these four last footnotes.

89 See Amino Yoshihiko (1994), pp. 87–94; (1991), pp. 108–20. The suffix *-maru* was usually given to children.

the sacred (*shusse*). Among the profane crafts we find, in a top to bottom hierarchy: literati, *bushi* soldiers, poets, court musicians, physicians, diviners, astrologists, *onmyōji*, *miko* and *kuchiyose* female shamans, painters, sculptors, carpenters, ironsmiths, tile makers, *tatami* makers, prostitutes, sailors, *kōshoku* (licentious people), *shirabyōshi* female entertainers, popular performers and musicians, merchants, and even gamblers (players of games such as *bakuchi*, *go*, *shōgi*, and *sugoroku*). Among the sacred craftspeople, the text lists, in bottom to top hierarchy: sutra chanters and preachers, *nenbutsu* chanters, *shōmyō* performers, Siddhaṃ masters, semi-priests (*hansō*), Zen priests, *yamabushi*, and fully ordained monks (Hossō, Sanron, Tendai, Kegon, Shingon). To each of these categories the text assigns a formula for memorial services.[90] Previously, the same text had divided the spirits of the dead according to their profession and status in life: profane (*seken*) from the emperor down to female Buddhist practitioners (*ubai*) in the profane section, and sacred (*shusse*), from high priest (*sōjō*) down to nuns and Zen priests (*zenmon*) in the sacred section. Again, each category has its own formulae for funerals and memorial services.[91] It is possible that the association of profession with memorial services later developed into professional religious rites, also in connection with the discursive continuity that the *Futsū shōdō shū* presents among the various arts and crafts. In this respect, it is possible that ceremonial protocols (*sahō*) guiding the everyday life of monasteries became the templates for secular rituals concerning the arts and crafts.

In fact, authors have suggested that in pre-modern Japan even secular arts and crafts had some specific relations with the sacred dimension of reality. Particularly important in this respect were those professions dealing with life and death (sword makers and *bushi*, midwives, funeral specialists, etc.), with the transformation of matter/nature (ironsmiths, carpenters, etc.), with performing arts (musicians, actors, prostitutes, etc.) as originally a sort of service industry to the deities; and with the production of wealth (merchants, gamblers, etc.).[92]

On a different discursive thread, the *honji suijaku* paradigm was far from separate from political and economic issues. In particular, the *suijaku* side (or sides) of the combination, that is, a local deity (either pre-existing or newly invented) was treated as the protector of a major temple. It intervened directly in worldly affairs by bestowing rewards onto good servants (monks, managers, peasants) and by punishing its "enemies" – those who did not follow the directives issuing from the religious institutions involved. Interestingly, the *honji* side(s) of the combination, that is buddhas and bodhisattvas, began to act in the same way as well: Kōbō Daishi and the

90 *Futsū shōdō shū*, in Murayama Shūichi (1976), pp. 195–298. The references for this section are on pp. 208–14.

91 Ibid., pp. 195–206.

92 See Nakazawa Shin'ichi (1988).

Great Buddha of the Tōdaiji are the most well-known examples, but even the Buddha Amida and the Pure Land Patriarchs were believed to operate directly in the world in a similar manner.[93] Moreover, buddhas and kami also acted indirectly in this world through a sort of "sacred police" constituted by the so-called *akusō* ("evil monks") and *jinin* ("men of the kami") associated with the main temple-shrine complexes.

More specifically, since the late Heian period labor and productive activities were increasingly envisioned as forms of human interaction with the inhabitants of the invisible world of the *honji suijaku* pantheon. For example, buddhas and kami together were actively present in land holdings and villages as protectors/punishers.[94] Taxes and levies were often presented by religious authorities as offerings to the buddhas and the kami owning the land. For example, Chōgen (1121–1206), the priest known for his successful fundraising for the reconstruction of the Tōdaiji, once stated: "the temple performs rituals (*kitō*) for its estates (*shōen*), while the estates provide (*eko*) for the temple."[95] In other words, the duty of peasants is to provide offerings (i.e. wealth) to the buddhas in the temple, whereas the duty of the priests is to protect the harvest. Here we see an explicit theory of a cycle of sacred economy. Agricultural loans acquired religious meaning when traditional practices of offering first produces (*nie*) to the kami and the emperor were appropriated by *kenmitsu* institutions such as Hie and Kumano and related to their combinatory deities. Interests were called *jōbun no mai* (superior portion of rice) or *hatsuho* (first ear of rice) – the traditional names of agricultural offerings.[96] Agricultural labor was presented as a salvation process. For example, the *Gozō mandara waeshaku* ("An explication of the mandala of the five internal organs"), a Shingon initiatory text of the thirteenth century, established esoteric correlations between seasons, agriculture, and salvation. A clear comparison is made in the text between the work of the farmer,[97] the life of plants,[98] the human cycle of suffering, and the five esoteric rituals. In addition, the text introduces two different cereal mandalas, including, respectively: millet, soy, wheat (*mugi*), sesame, rice; and soy, barley, *azuki* beans, wheat, and rice. In both mandalas, rice is situated at the center, in the place of Dainichi Nyorai

93 On this subject, see the Satō Hiroo's chapter in the present volume; see also Rambelli (2002).

94 This point is emphasized by countless medieval documents containing oaths and petitions known as *kishōmon*.

95 *Kamakura ibun*, vol. 2, no. 621, pp. 45–6.

96 On this subject, see Amino (1996).

97 The farmers "sow in the spring, transplant the rice plants in the summer, harvest in the fall, and, after they have stored the rice in the storehouse, they have nothing left to do": *Gozō mandara waeshaku*, Kanazawa Bunko.

98 Plants "grow in the spring, are assaulted by insects in the summer, their leaves turn red and are scattered by the tempest in the fall, and everything is still in winter": ibid.

and enlightenment.[99] It is not surprising, then, that the Shingon priest Ban'a presented work in the fields as a meritorious deed determining rebirth in the Pure Land (and, in contrast, refusal to work – and to pay taxes – as the cause for damnation in hell).[100] Finally, professional guilds (*za*) were usually affiliated with religious institutions and the imperial household; they were in charge of several ritual duties and obligations (presented again as offerings) in exchange for protection and a local monopoly over their trade.

To sum up, we can probably hypothesize a gradual diffusion of religious models to secular everyday practices, in a paradoxical contrast with the increasing secularization of religious institutions – a phenomenon that was especially relevant during the Edo period.

Nativism and the sacredness of labor

The strategies and processes aimed at the sacralization of everyday life and productive activities, implemented by Buddhist and Shinto institutions in late medieval Japan on the basis of *honji suijaku* as a structural and ritual matrix, proved to be extraordinarily influential. They set the standard for subsequent analogous attempts, especially in the forms proposed by exponents of the Nativist tradition (*kokugaku*) in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Hirata Atsutane (1776–1843), for example, described work, and agriculture in particular, as a continuous interaction with the invisible world of the kami. The Nativists were mainly engaged in the construction of a new discourse through a systematic erasure of Buddhist (*honji suijaku*) traces from notions such as language, morality, nation, and economics, which had been developed by the medieval *kenmitsu* system.[101]

For example, when Hirata Atsutane created an ideology of labor for the upper segments of the peasantry in the provinces – claiming that peasants were the mediators between the productive force of the kami (*musubi*) which operates in the Invisible World, and the production of material wealth in this world – he was using the late medieval *honji suijaku* understanding of the nature of wealth stripped of its Buddhist aspects.

Sacralization of work was an attempt to turn culture into nature; as H. Harootunian puts it, "To reproduce in custom the act of creation, to 'imitate' the kami, was an intention endowed by the gods; therefore, it constituted a

99 Ibid.

100 Ban'a, in *Kamakura ibun*, vol. 2, no. 575, pp. 3–5.

101 The *kenmitsu* system was, in this respect, not too different from Nativism. It too appropriated and modified non-Buddhist beliefs and practices to fit them within its own system. However, my impression is that there was a substantial difference separating *kenmitsu* appropriation of non-Buddhist elements and Nativist appropriation of formerly Buddhist elements, namely, the fact that the latter was much more narrow, dogmatic, and exclusivistic than the former. This subject, however, deserves further investigation.

natural, not a cultural or historical, activity."[102] Work process was redefined as a collective act, far away from growing individualism of the Edo period. Harootunian writes:

> By collective work, humans encountered these cosmic moments and saw themselves in a relationship to the deities, who were everywhere. They, the cosmos, and all the deities participated in a series of mutual transactions constituting the human plot; all things and objects were drawn into the orbit of life as totality to become living, animate participants in its events. Their participation in the plot was placed in the foreground, rather than serving as "background" or as a remote landscape separated from the locus of human activity.[103]

Hirata's nativism attempted to overcome the contemporary situation by proposing an a-temporal, or archaic, model of collective labor that "fused humans and nature in a common undertaking."[104] In Harootunian's words, "Hirata's narrative sublated the differentiation between productivity (work), religion (worship – that is, repayment to the gods), and everyday life (custom) by unifying these activities in the body."[105] By focusing on everyday activities of ordinary people, such as work, but also "table manners, kinship relationship, and household duties,"[106] Hirata and his followers were attempting to counter a growing sense of alienation of labor, and thus this amounted to a criticism of contemporary society. Importantly, however, Hirata's teachings are mainly directed to village leadership and peasantry – differently from medieval and early modern ritual instructions for all professions. For Hirata, worship was a "total attitude that was disclosed in all activities from eating through work itself";[107] even consumption was "a form of religious devotion."[108] In his system, "worship came to mean an exchange for products and things and thereby signified the 'blessings' and 'abundances' that this deity had made available to the ordinary people to carry on the job of living. Yet it was work that put people back into 'nature' and established the modes of a natural social reproduction to transform the 'gift' into actuality. Work made custom and a 'historyless history' possible."[109] We are dealing here with an archaic economy, a mode of production that predates (ideally and ideologically) the formation of social classes; with his "acknowledged refusal to conceptualize the economic as a separate activity,"[110] Hirata was trying to

102 H. D. Harootunian (1986), p. 169.
103 Ibid., p. 171.
104 Ibid., p. 172.
105 Ibid., p. 171.
106 Ibid., p. 185.
107 Ibid., p. 212.
108 Ibid.
109 Ibid., p. 214.
110 Ibid., p. 215.

"dissolv[e] the various forms of work into worship and the repayment of the gods."[111] Later authors followed Hirata and developed a cosmology of work based on ontological principles.[112]

During the Edo period, Nativist and Neo-Shinto movements became increasingly popular, and affected the ways in which people acted and thought about their acts. Buddhism (or perhaps should I say the more explicitly "Buddhist" side of the *honji suijaku* discourse) became less and less relevant in work and economic activities. Until then, "Shinto" rituals served essentially as a kind of homeopathic anesthetic to enable the transformation of natural materials (envisioned as belonging to the kami) into Buddhist artifacts. This was particularly evident in the ritual processes accompanying the production of buddha images or the construction of a temple. By transforming raw materials into a buddha or into the site of buddha's presence, Buddhist institutions gave concrete material form to the idea of "becoming buddha" (*jōbutsu*): in particular, the kami were literally turned into buddhas when a log was sculpted into a buddha image.[113] But by the late Edo period, the transformation of nature into construction materials and buildings was increasingly envisioned as a process controlled exclusively by the kami and managed by ritual experts belonging to Shinto institutions. At that point, it was the kami – and their professionals – who made possible the construction of a temple, not the buddhas who made possible the transformation of a kami (or an object belonging to the kami). In other words, the shift of religious paradigm that occurs in the Edo period was inscribed in construction materials and related ritual practices as well.[114]

Modern developments: corporate Japan and the sacred

Nativist ideas on the sacredness of work were later used by Meiji ideologues, and more recently, they even seem to have influenced the new productive systems of Japanese companies. What remains of the sacralization of productive activities, once upon a time a key feature of Japanese Buddhism, is today more closely related to Shinto, as in the well-known phenomenon of shrines belonging to commercial and industrial firms.

As Ian Reader has indicated, "religious motifs, and especially the kami, are being utilized by contemporary business organisations and companies, many of which have 'turned to the gods' not so much in times of trouble but as a means of incorporating the socially bonding and production-orientated functions of religion, and especially Shinto, into their own

111 Ibid., p. 216.

112 Ibid., pp. 253–72.

113 See Rambelli (2001b).

114 Even temple construction was increasingly "Shinto," as clearly shown by a contemporary picture of the celebrations for the reconstruction of Nishi Honganji: see Kokuritsu Rekishi Minzoku Hakubutsukan (ed.) (1996), p. 72.

ethos."[115] In particular, "Japanese companies and business concerns are well known for their efforts at creating harmony and cohesion."[116] It is "the *kami* and Shinto structures that are most widely co-opted for the benefit of business concerns because of their traditional involvement with fertility, production, and the support of the community. This is turn perhaps reflects a tacit recognition in the Japanese commercial world of traditional views of causation: even the creation of wealth may need co-operation on the spiritual plane from the *kami*."[117] As we have seen, this kind of "traditional" vision is not very old: it is a consequence of Nativist eradication of Buddhism from many aspects of everyday life, especially production. However, some companies still practice forms of religious syncretism that, even though they cannot be defined as manifestations of *honji suijaku* discourse, still testify to the pre-modern intertwined presence of buddhas and kami in economic matters. For example, companies may have elected Inari as their tutelary deity, but still have funeral sites and memorials for employees in Buddhist temples (particularly famous in this respect is Kōyasan's cemetery). Other companies, such as Mitsukoshi, worship both Buddhist and Shinto deities. For example, Ginza Mitsukoshi department store has on its roof the Mitsui shrine and a hall dedicated to Jizō (Ginza shusse Jizōson).[118] Still others, such as Matsuzakaya, worship one of the few *honji suijaku* deities still existent in Japan, Toyokawa Inari (whose main cultic center is the Sōtō Zen temple Kakumyōgonji in Toyokawa near Nagoya).

Many companies "adopt religious institutions and forms to reinforce the sense of devoted discipline they seek from their employees."[119] In fact, the top management of Japanese companies seems to attribute an important role to religion: not so much as a source of inspiration for business strategies, but rather as a tool for the formation and the management of employees.[120] In this sense, there is no gap between religious ideals and business operations, as Ishii Kenji maintains;[121] rather, some "traditional," stereotypical religious ideas are used as ideological and ritual tools to enforce the management's will and inculcate in employees a certain corporate culture based on corporativism, hierarchy, and "harmony" – much as in mystified visions of traditional village life.[122] Religion again is part of a microphysics of power, strategies that associate welfare, peace of mind, and success with the respect of authority and hierarchy.

115 Ian Reader (1991) p. 59. For a detailed case study of corporate religious practices, see David C. Lewis (1993), pp. 157–70.
116 Reader (1991), p. 74.
117 Ibid., p. 75.
118 Ishii Kenji (1994), p. 218.
119 Reader (1991), p. 74.
120 See the statistical data in Ishii Kenji (1994), pp. 246–50.
121 Ibid., p. 245.
122 Ibid., pp. 250–4.

Epilogue: Japanese religion and the micropolitics of everyday life

One of the strategies to establish control over the territory and the people – what is usually called the "diffusion of Buddhism" – adopted by virtually all religious institutions in medieval Japan consisted of transforming everyday activities into soteriological practices. Agriculture, hunting and fishing, trade, and professional activities within temples' manors, among other things, were sacralized and described as instances of ritual interaction with the "invisible world" (*meikai*) of buddhas and kami. Once sacralized, productive activities were directly connected with soteriology and the acquisition of karmic benefits. Thus, everything could be explained in Buddhist terms, and one of the key elements of Buddhism throughout pre-modern Japan was the *honji suijaku* logic in its various forms. Religious institutions and their members became "masters of signs": they controlled the production and the circulation of "official" meaning and were able to establish and authorize customs and forms of behavior.

Work was envisioned as a projection of the cosmic activity of the buddhas and local activities of the kami onto a smaller plane, that of a particular building or household – a sort of microsoteriology, a microphysics of salvation with all its micropolitical effects that still need to be investigated. These rituals were informed by and displayed all of the constituting features of the *honji suijaku* paradigm, which was based on the dominant Buddhist visions concerning cosmology, epistemology, semiotics, soteriology, and social ideology. In this respect, the documents I have referred to in this chapter and their related intertexts probably played the additional function of spreading knowledge of esoteric notions, rituals and deities, the result of which would have been the formation of a special category of people unofficially initiated to the secrets of the Shingon and Shugendō traditions.

One's individual labor is presented in these texts as a form of self-cultivation through the study and the practice of Shinto, Mikkyō, and Shugendō rituals and doctrines. In fact, through work one could attain a sort of enlightenment, based on the imitation of the deeds of buddhas and kami. The task of the carpenter was to recreate in this world the realm of the deities of which his tools were manifestations; a good piece of work was the result of the carpenter's communication with the realm of the deities. Analogously, a merchant was displaying in his work religious notions of the sacred. These texts are actually full of doctrinal fragments, such as "plants and trees become buddhas" (*sōmoku jōbutsu*), "heaven and earth have the same root; all things are of one substance";[123] all space is empty, kami and sentient beings (*shujō*) are mutually interrelated,[124] references to primordial

123 *Miwaryū shintō genryūshū kizeibu shoshoku shōnin nōnin bu shiso kan*, in *Ōmiwa jinja shiryō*, vol. 5, p. 353.

124 *Miwa shintō genryūshū shimin inshitsu kowarawa* in ibid., pp. 390–1.

chaos ("all sentient beings before the separation of chaos"),[125] and myths of various kinds.

Hatta Yukio simplistically suggests that all this was the manifestation of the devotion of "simple and honest" (*sunao*) artisans, who tried to unite their faith with love for their job.[126] Hatta even sees in this attitude a manifestation of the same spirit described by Weber in his book on Protestantism and the spirit of capitalism. In fact, we can observe in the texts discussed in this chapter a systematic fetishization of tools and labor processes: workers are not merely working, but they are participating in a cosmic operation in collaboration with buddhas, kami, and other deities of the *honji suijaku* pantheon. We can perhaps see in this an attempt to "unalienate" and re-enchant labor, especially at a time of dramatic social and economic transformations toward capitalism.

Did these texts serve to reproduce false conscience or were they attempts to take control over production in spite of the general trends in contemporary society? When we consider the historical processes related to the esotericization of productive activities, we see the attempt of religious institutions to permeate with their ideology all spaces in the public and private spheres. There is probably no way to know whether the carpenters who performed these rituals were conscious of being engaged in a religious act that would have turned them into living buddhas, creators of paradise on earth, or whether they did it just out of duty – actually, whether they did it at all. It is well possible that they performed these rituals as marks of distinction of their lineages and their profession, without any direct (or strong) religious connotation. Be that as it may, what matters here is that their profession was described and conceptualized in religious terms. The appearance and the transmission of these documents and ritual practices since the late Muromachi period, and especially in the Edo period, can be explained in different ways:

1. as a lack of earlier evidence, but similar documents may have existed before;
2. as a late medieval/early modern phenomenon: as a response to their increasing loss of influence, religious institutions carried out a systematic sacralization of everyday life, as an attempt to reconfigure their arena of intervention in society: production, divided into the two subfields of labor and sexuality (reproduction), was the main area of intervention;
3. as a more general social phenomenon: the loss of aura of sacrality surrounding arts and crafts professional groups (*geinōmin* or *shokunin*) after the Nanbokuchō era (early fourteenth century), as described by Amino Yoshihiko, forced these people to put their sacrality in explicit terms, by authoring *honjimono* narratives about themselves and their tools, and by editing ritual procedures turning their work into a sacred performance;

125 Ibid., p. 392.
126 Hatta Yukio (1991), p. 226.

4 in order to protect their autonomy, threatened by competing warlords and regional feudal authorities, professional groups emphasized in these texts and rituals their intrinsically ultramundane nature.

In other words, these documents and rituals could be instances either of a top-down attempt to control and regiment society and productive activities in particular, or a bottom-up appropriation of dominant discursive strategies as an attempt to stress the autonomy and peculiarities of professional categories in decline. In any case, what matters here is that these expressions were part of the dominant Buddhist discourse, and made large use of *honji suijaku* logic.

To conclude, we can identify several continuities and discontinuities in the connections between religion, economics and social ideology in Japanese culture:

1 Labor as transformation of nature and reality is connected to the realm of the sacred and presupposes the intervention of the deities; wealth is described as something that comes from the Invisible Realm as a retribution for a certain behavior – usually connected with the maintenance of established order; that explains today's corporate religious rituals performed to the kami (and, in fewer cases, to some Buddhist deities, mainly Fudō Myōō).
2 Social order, as it is represented in everyday practices and productive activities in particular, is described as a manifestation of the sacred order of the Invisible World. Not just in purely abstract or theological terms: sacredness was directly inscribed in the objects, the actions, and the bodies of the people who used them, and affected them not only in the festive and sporadic moments of ritual, but in many aspects of their everyday life.
3 Religious institutions attempted to control all aspects of life by marking them with the symbols of the deities: ideally, at least, all actions and thoughts had to be conformed to some ritual protocol invoking some deities. I mentioned before the extensive and capillary microphysics of power attempted by such ritualization – a microphysics of power that was at least in part directly connected to the efforts of the religious institutions to ensure a solid impact on people – especially during the Edo period, under the supervision of the Tokugawa regime. The late Muromachi and Edo periods are usually described as times of degeneration for Buddhism, but they were actually the moments in which Buddhism was most powerful, since it pervaded virtually all aspects of everyday life, from class structure and organization, visions of the territory, to each individual's objects and actions.
4 On the other hand, such sacralization of the everyday ended up empowering its practitioners even against the intentions of religious institutions. If the sacred could be found everywhere and in every action, it did not

require an extensive intervention of religious professionals: religious institutions were becoming de facto irrelevant. In this way, the moment of most massive presence of religious institutions in the life of the Japanese coincided paradoxically with the beginning of secularization. The disaffection of modern Japanese people with religious institutions probably began at this point.

5 In pre-modern Japan, the sacralization of everyday life and related connections between religion, economics, and ideology, were largely based on Buddhism which tended generally to take the shape of *honji suijaku*; in early modern Japan and, more drastically, after the Meiji cultural revolution, the religious-ideological-economic complex was stripped of its most visible Buddhist elements which had been an essential component until then.

11

THE INTERACTION BETWEEN BUDDHIST AND SHINTO TRADITIONS AT SUWA SHRINE

Inoue Takami

Suwa Shrine consists of two main sites, the Upper Shrine (*kamisha*) and the Lower Shrine (*shimosha*) by Lake Suwa in central Japan. During the medieval and early modern periods, it was not a "Shinto" shrine because Buddhist symbols, institutions and practices were significant parts of this renowned religious center. Its early history is obscure, but it is probable, considering the date of the shrine-temples (*jingūji*) in the principal shrines (*ichi no miya*) of other provinces, that the Jingūji of Suwa Shrine was also founded during the Nara period.[1] Under the patronage of the powerful Suwa (also called Miwa or Kanasashi) clan, the descendants of the Kuni no Miyatsuko of Shinano province, these Buddhist temples developed interdependently with the shrines of kami, and formed a sizable religious complex by the middle of the Kamakura period. With their doctrinal and cultural resources, the Buddhist institutions contributed to the spread of the cult of Suwa Daimyōjin and the prosperity of the complex. At its peak during the medieval period, there were more than thirty sub-temples (*in*, *bō*) in the Lower Shrine complex alone. Though the number decreased during the Edo period, the shrine-temples continued to play indispensable roles, such as the observance of special Buddhist rites for the kami. The Buddhist parts of the combination, however, were singled out and destroyed at the beginning of the Meiji period during the so-called "separation of kami and buddhas" (*shinbutsu bunri*), and this destruction was so radical that the pre-modern history of the Suwa Shrine has been almost completely forgotten today. This chapter traces the history of Buddhist and Shinto interactions at this renowned shrine, focusing on the Upper Shrine during the late Edo and early Meiji periods. Our survey of *shinbutsu bunri* in the first year of Meiji will show that Suwa

1 See Gorai Shigeru (1987), pp. 197–8.

Shrine was fundamentally transformed by the "dissociation" imposed by the central government.

Suwa Upper Shrine during the late Edo period

Religious landscape

The main compound of the Suwa Upper Shrine (*Suwa kamisha honmiya*) was located in Jingūji village on the south-eastern shore of Lake Suwa. The fact that the village was named after Jingūji ("Kami Shrine-Temple") indicates the importance of Buddhist institutions at the Upper Shrine. The shrine part of the sanctuary was surrounded by Jingūji, Hokkeji, and other Buddhist temples.[2] *Suwa-han isson kagiri mura chizu*, a map of the village drawn in 1733, depicts the arrangement of the shrines and temples (Figure 11.1).[3] Although many of the wooden structures were rebuilt during the Edo period, their configuration had not been changed since the Middle Ages. The Buddhist temples on the south-eastern hillside were connected to the main precincts near the water, and together they constituted a large religious complex. A panoramic view of the Suwa Upper Shrine before *shinbutsu bunri* can be seen in a woodprint that was a popular souvenir for pilgrims during the late Edo period (Figure 11.2).[4] The picture shows that the Buddhist structures, especially the five-storied pagoda and the Fugendō hall that overlooked the whole area, were the dominant buildings in the landscape. The legend on the original print reads "A Chart of the Upper Shrine of Suwa: the First Shrine (*ichi no miya*) of Shinano Province," and attests to the fact that Buddhist temples were an integral part of the Upper Shrine.

Pilgrims who visited this Upper Shrine experienced the religious complex as a single sacred space inhabited by both kami and buddhas/bodhisattvas. Descriptions by those who visited it during the late Edo period indicate that people followed a pilgrimage route inside the compound, and worshipped both the kami of the Upper Shrine and the buddhas/bodhisattvas associated with it.[5]

The principal kami of the Upper Shrine was called Takeminakata in the *Kojiki*, and Suwa (Nangū) Hosshō Daimyōjin in the medieval literature of

2 Since all the Buddhist institutions were abolished and most of their structures were destroyed in 1868, the descriptions in this section are based on previous research that used existing documents. See Imai Masaki (1925, 1926, 1935); Washio Junkei (1983); Hayashi Takeo (1978); Hosono Masao (1981, 1982).

3 Imai Masaki (1935), p. 132, Figure 11: "Kamisha fuzoku jiin dōtō." The original map is *Suwa han isson kagiri mura chizu* (1733).

4 Hosono Masao (1981). The original woodprint is *Shinano no kuni ichi no miya Suwa Kamisha no zu* by Konami Kairyūdō.

5 For example, see the travel diary of Sugae Masumi (1754–1829), *Suwa no umi*, in *Shinpen Shinano shiryō sōsho*, vol. 10, p. 256. Sugae visited the Upper Shrine in 1774. See also Kobayashi Keiichirō (1997). Ōyazu visited the Upper Shrine in 1832 on his way to Ise Shrine.

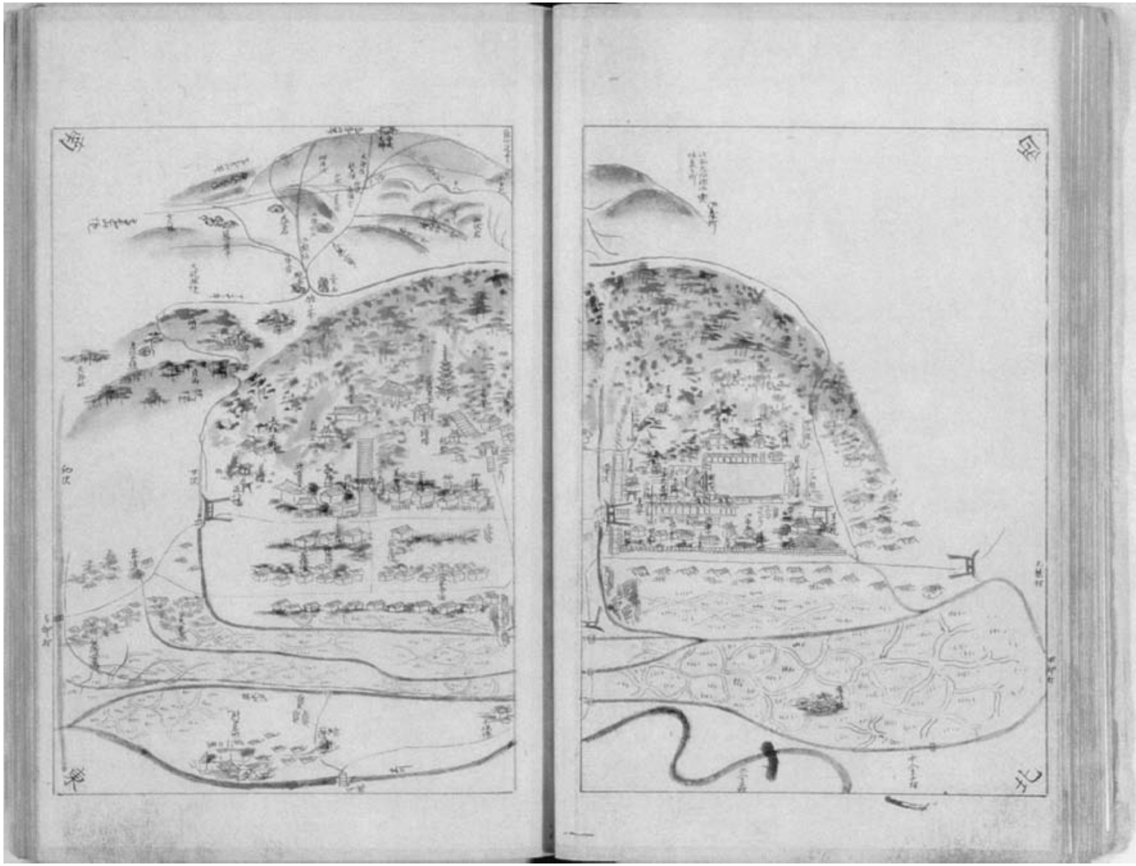


Figure 11.1
Suwa-han isson kagiri mura chizu, a map of Jinguji village drawn in 1733, depicting the main compound of the Suwa Upper Shrine (Nagano Prefectural Museum of History).

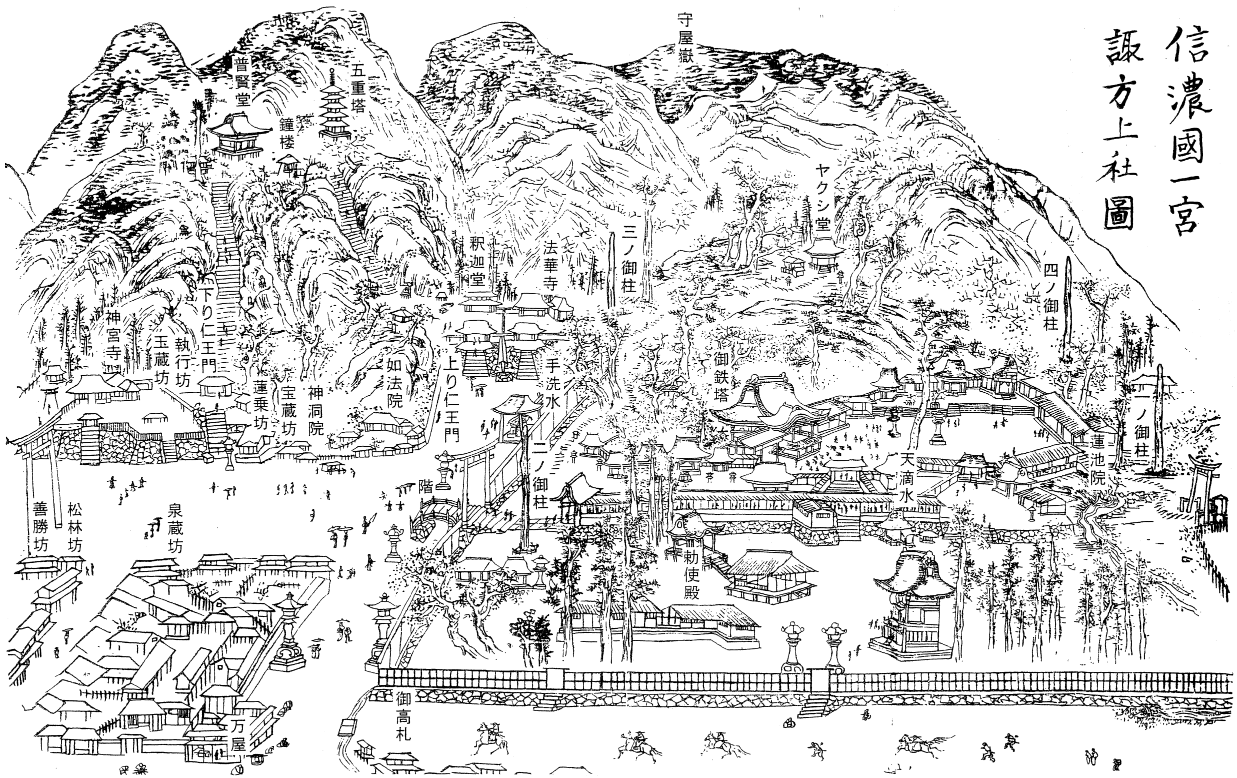


Figure 11.2 View of the Suwa Upper Shrine from a woodprint that was popular during the late Edo period (Suwa City Museum).

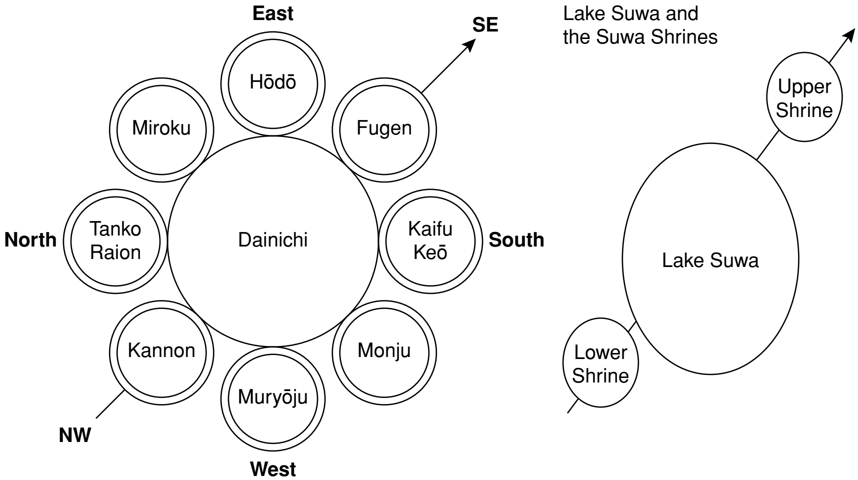


Figure 11.3 *Chūdai hachiyō-in* of the Womb mandala; Lake Suwa and the Suwa Shrines (based on Miyasaka Yūshō, "Kami to hotoke no yūgō: Mikkyō shisō kara no kaishaku" in *Onbashira matsuri to Suwa Taisha*, p. 151, Figure 2).

Ryōbu Shinto, though during the late Edo period, the kami was usually known as Suwa Daimyōjin, or simply the kami of Suwa. According to the accepted *honji suijaku* relationship, the *honji* of the kami was the bodhisattva Fugen (Sk. Samantabhadra). This association was established during the early medieval period, when Shingon monks interpreted the topography of the Suwa basin as the central part of the Womb Mandala (*chūdai hachiyō-in*, "central pedestal constituted by an eight-petal lotus") (Figure 11.3). Both the Upper and the Lower Shrines are located, respectively, to the south-east and the north-west of Lake Suwa, and if Lake Suwa is taken as Dainichi (Sk. Mahāvairocana) in the mandala, the shrines correspond to bodhisattvas Fugen and Kannon, respectively. The association was also reflected in the ordering of space at the Upper Shrine. The principal structures for the worship of the kami were aligned along a north-west/south-east axis that pointed toward the Fugendō hall on the hillside (Figure 11.4).[6] The pilgrimage inside the Upper Shrine began from the main precincts on the western side, and followed this axis.

The most important structure here was the Hall of Worship (*haiden*) from which people revered the kami. There was no Main Hall (*honden*) enshrining the object of worship. The Hall of Worship faced south-east, and the kami was supposed to reside somewhere in that direction. Through the bamboo blinds,

6 Miyasaka Yūshō (1987), pp. 151–2, 180.

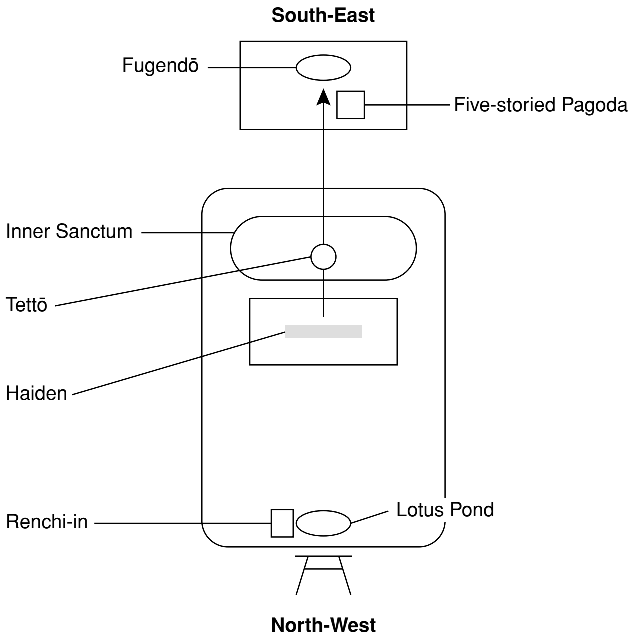


Figure 11.4 The orientation of the Upper Shrine.

worshippers could see the inner sanctum (*naijin*) covered with trees and a thicket of bamboo grass. A small Buddhist pagoda called the Iron Pagoda (Tettō) stood among the trees,[7] and was considered to be the body of the kami (*goshintai*), which most maps depicted clearly as the main object of worship of the shrine. The existence of this Buddhist *goshintai* in the inner sanctum epitomizes the persistence of association practices since the medieval period. When people worshipped the kami from the *haiden*, they also faced the Fugendō at a distance. The hall may not have been in direct view, but knowledgeable worshippers were aware of the significance of the orientation. An elaborate sculpture of an elephant's trunk bedecked the *haiden*, and reminded the worshippers of the association between the kami and the bodhisattva Fugen, whose metonymical symbol is the elephant on which he rides. After worshipping here, pilgrims proceeded to the Buddhist quarter.

The principal structures in this area were the five-storied pagoda and the Fugendō on the south-eastern hillside, the former being a magnificent landmark, the tallest pagoda in Shinano province, which enshrined the statues of

7 The Tettō (height 1.98 m) may have been obscured by a thicket of bamboo grass during the late Edo period. Sugae Masumi noted that he could see only the bamboo grass in the inner sanctum, but the *goshintai*'s existence was well known.

the five central buddhas in the Diamond mandala: Dainichi (Mahāvairocana), Amida (Amitābha), Ashuku (Akṣobhya), Fukū (Amogha), and Hōshō (Ratnākara). During the medieval period, when the pagoda was built, the site of the Upper Shrine was considered to represent the Diamond mandala. In contrast, the three-storied pagoda of the Lower Shrine enshrined a statue of Dainichi in the Womb mandala.[8]

Next to the pagoda stood the Fugendō, a splendid hall dedicated to the "original state" of the kami of Suwa. Its main image was a statue of Fugen sitting on an elephant. This was the most important ritual space in the Buddhist quarter, and many people, including Shinto priests, attended the Flower Rite (*hana-e*) and other seasonal ceremonies observed in the hall. There was a bell tower outside it, and the sound of the bell (cast in 1296) announced not only the beginning of the services but also the time of the day to the villages around the Upper Shrine. The Fugendō was both the core of the sacred space in the Upper Shrine and the source of sacred time in the Suwa basin before 1868. In this way, Buddhist symbols occupied important positions in the religious landscape of the Upper Shrine.

Institutional organizations

Both temple-monks and shrine-priests served in the Upper Shrine. Although there was a basic division of labor between them, their practices were integrated into the cult of Suwa Daimyōjin. Before their separation in 1868, it was not unusual to see monks chanting sutras in the main precincts, or shrine-priests participating in rituals held in the Buddhist quarter. They had separate organizations, but both belonged to the Suwa Upper Shrine.

The primary role of the shrine was to observe communal rites for the people in Suwa county, and it was organized for this purpose. The hereditary head priest, called the *ōhōri*, was believed to be a descendant of Takeminakata, the kami of Suwa. The *ōhōri*'s family name was interchangeably Suwa or Jin (also read Miwa) meaning "kami." In some of the important rites, the *ōhōri* played the role of the kami. The second priest, called *jinchōgan*, was believed to be a descendant of the indigenous kami Moriya, who had been subjugated by Takeminakata in the mythical age. The *jinchōgan* also served as the kami in some of the rites. The other high priests were also considered to be descendants of local kami related to Takeminakata.[9] These priests officiated the "Shinto" rites of the Upper Shrine, which can be characterized as periodic re-enactments of significant events in prehistoric communal life.[10] The shrine administrators and other personnel assisted them in the preparation and

8 See Miyasaka Yūshō (1987), pp. 158–60. The three-storied pagoda of the Lower Shrine enshrined a statue of Dainichi in the Womb mandala.

9 On these sacerdotal lineages, see Washio Junkei (1983), pp. 484–94.

10 Gorai Shigeru (1987).

performance of these rites. In the Pillar Rite (*onbashira-matsuri*), which was held every six years (in the years of the monkey and the tiger), the shrine institutions of the complexes mobilized all the villages in Suwa county, and ceremoniously renewed the huge pillars standing at the corners of the sanctums of both the Upper and Lower Shrines.[11]

The sacerdotal houses of the high priests also engaged actively in the propagation of the cult of Suwa Daimyōjin. Like the more famous *onshi* of Ise Shrine, the *oshi* of Suwa traveled around Shinano and neighboring provinces, preaching the benefits given by the kami of Suwa, delivering special talismans called *kajiki-men* ("permits for eating venison") or *kajiki-bashi* ("chopsticks for eating venison"), and collecting offerings for the shrine. The talisman was a religious license for hunting and eating meat, and since it was the only one of its kind in Japan, it was popular among hunters and those who ate meat. The *oshi* typically preached *engi* stories such as the *Suwa no honji* in order to explain the origin of the kami and the reason for its special blessings. Thanks to the activities of the *oshi* during the medieval and early-modern periods, the *honji suijaku* theory concerning Suwa Daimyōjin was widely popularized.[12]

The Buddhist institutions of the Upper Shrine had different functions. The primary task of the shrine-temples was to perform elaborate Buddhist rituals for the kami. During the late Edo period, there were four major shrine-temples: Jingūji, Nyohō-in, Renchi-in, and Hokkeji. The first three belonged to the Shingon school, while the last to the Rinzai Zen school. The head shrine-temple (*bettōji*) was Jingūji, the oldest and largest of the four, which took charge of the major rites performed in the Fugendō. Nyohō-in and Renchi-in were its branch-temples (*betsuin*) located inside the shrine precincts. The former specialized in the *Lotus Sutra* Ritual (*nyohōkyō-e*), the annual offering of this sutra to the kami who was believed to reside in or under the Iron Pagoda. The latter was in charge of Shingon fire rituals (*goma*) for the kami. The Zen temple Hokkeji was responsible for the funerary rites of the shrine community. Since the shrine-priests of the Upper Shrine were parishioners (*danka*) of Hokkeji, their funerals were officiated over by the monks of the temple. The offering of tea to the kami was also the task of this Zen temple. Under these major shrine-temples, there were eighteen smaller institutions (*bō*). Six of these were staffed by "temple-monks" (*tera-sō*) while the other twelve were staffed by "shrine-monks" (*miya-sō*). The latter engaged mainly in the practices related to the kami. In this way, the shrine-temples were organized to serve the kami.

11 The highlight of the Pillar Rite was introduced to the world in the opening ceremony of the 1998 Winter Olympic Games in Nagano. About the details of the *onbashira*, see Gerbert (1996).

12 On the propagation of the Suwa cult and its talismans, see Nagano Kenshi Kankōkai (ed.) (1968–92): *Nagano kenshi tsūshi-hen*, vol. 3 (1987), pp. 581–2; *Onbashira matsuri to Suwa Taisha*, pp. 54–7.

The Tokugawa shogunate and the local government recognized and supported the institutional combination. Land donations to the Upper Shrine by the shogunate (*shuin-chi*) and by the local lord (*kokuin-chi*) were allocated to the temples as well as to the shrines in the complex. Tokugawa Iemitsu granted five villages in Suwa county (worth 1,000 *koku* of rice) to the Suwa Upper Shrine in 1648, and Suwa Tadatora, the fourth lord of the Takashima domain, donated 100 *koku* worth of land in 1695. From the yields of these lands, the *ōhōri* received 300 *koku*, and the four shrine-temples a total of 100 *koku*. The revenues of the shrine-temples indicate that they continued to form a significant part of the Upper Shrine throughout the Edo period.[13]

Association in practice

The temples and the shrines came together in some of the major rites of the Upper Shrine. The most important among them were the *Lotus Sutra* Ritual (*nyohōkyō-e*) and the Flower Rite (*hana-e*). Although these rites were based on Buddhist lore and officiated over by the shrine-monks, the shrine-priests and other personnel also took part in them. These rites illustrate the deep-rooted association of kami and buddhas/bodhisattvas before the Meiji period.

The *Lotus Sutra* Ritual was the best example of the association in practice at the Upper Shrine. In this rite, shrine-monks entered the innermost sanctum of the main precincts, and offered a copy of the *Lotus Sutra* inside the Iron Pagoda, which, as we have seen, was considered to be the body of the kami. The offering was followed by prayers to the kami in both Buddhist and "Shinto" style. According to a document written by the head monk of Nyohō-in in 1868, the rite constituted the "quintessence of Ryōbu Shinto," and represented the "non-duality of original essence and its traces."[14]

As indicated by its name, it was Nyohō-in that was in charge of this important ritual. The preparations began on the fourteenth day of the fourth month, when the monks of Nyohō-in started making a special copy of the *Lotus Sutra*. They underwent strict purification, secluded themselves in the Nyohōdō hall for a hundred days, and copied the sutra carefully, using special brushes and cinnabar red ink. When this was finished, the sutra was placed on a pedestal representing a white lotus flower, and the monks chanted the *Lotus Sutra* three times a day in front of the pedestal until it was offered to the kami in the Iron Pagoda. Before entering the inner sanctum, the monks underwent strict purification once more. While in seclusion, they performed

13 On the land donations by the shogunate and the Takashima domain, see Nagano Kenshi Kankōkai (eds) (1968–92): *Nagano kenshi: tsūshi-hen*, vol. 4: *Kinsei* 1 (1987), pp. 138–40. The revenue of the shrine-temples is based on Washio Junkei (1983), pp. 452–3. The revenue of the *ōhōri* is based on Suwa-shishi hensankai (eds) (1988) (Chūkan: Kinsei), p. 898.

14 "Himitsuzan Nyohōin Kiritsusho," cited in Imai Masaki (1925), pp. 49–50.

the final prayer ritual for two nights and three days in the Nyohōdō. After these long preparations, the scripture was finally ready to be offered, and it was presented to the kami on the sixteenth day of the tenth month, when all the clergy of the Upper Shrine, including the *ōhōri*, the *jinchōgan*, and other shrine-priests, gathered in front of the Hall of Worship. At the beginning of the hour of the dragon (seven o'clock in the morning), the shrine-monks carried the copy of the *Lotus Sutra* from the Nyohōdō to the Iron Pagoda. The head monk opened the door of the pagoda, and offered the sutra to the kami. The ritual inside the inner sanctum was closed to the shrine-priests so that they could not look inside the pagoda. The head monk reported every year that the previous year's offerings had mysteriously disappeared, suggesting that the kami had "relished" the Buddhist teachings. When the monks came out from the inner sanctum, the participants prayed to the kami for peace and happiness. While the monks chanted sutras and mantras, the *miko* and *yaotome* (female shamanic dancers) performed *kagura* dances for the kami. In this way, both Buddhist practices and kami practices were combined, and the entire shrine community celebrated the occasion.

This annual ritual represented the complex association that had developed during the medieval period. The practice of placing sutras inside the Iron Pagoda was based on the legend of the famous Indian scholar-monk Nāgārjuna, who was said to have discovered esoteric scriptures hidden inside the Iron Pagoda (Tettō) in a city named Amaravatī ("Abode of gods") in south India. In the Shingon version of this legend, the discovered scriptures were the *Dainichikyō* and *Kongōchōgyō*, the principal sutras of that school.[15] The Iron Pagoda in south India became associated with the kami of the Suwa Upper Shrine probably because the kami was believed to have the body of a large snake. However, there is no historical record that attests to the origin of the Iron Pagoda and the *Lotus Sutra* Ritual in Suwa. Tradition holds that Kūkai (774–835), the founder of the Shingon school, built the Iron Pagoda when he offered the *Lotus Sutra* to the kami of Suwa on imperial orders. The *Lotus Sutra* Ritual is said to have been initiated by Ennin (794–864), the third patriarch of the Tendai school. Though these attributions may be spurious, they suggest that monks belonging to these esoteric schools first constructed the Iron Pagoda and started the *Lotus Sutra* Ritual during the Heian period, inspired by the legend that the kami of Suwa was a large serpent.[16] The *Lotus Sutra* was an appropriate offering for the kami of Suwa because of the scripture's association with the bodhisattva Fugen, identified as the "original form" of the kami. In the last chapter of this sutra, Fugen promises to appear on a six-tusked white elephant and protect those who uphold the *Lotus Sutra* in

15 See Charles Orzech (1995).

16 The details of the history of the Iron Pagoda in the Upper Shrine and its association with the Iron Pagoda in South India, see Imai Masaki (1926), pp. 51–6. See also Miyasaka Yūshō (1987), pp. 153–6.

the evil and corrupt final age of the Dharma. The connection between Fugen and the *Lotus Sutra* must have been significant during the medieval period, when awareness of the "evil and corrupt age" (*mappō*) was strong, though in the relative peace of the Edo period, the association might have lost its original significance. Nonetheless, the basic theme of the ritual was understood without difficulty. According to a popular account, "there is a bottomless cave underneath the inner sanctum of the Upper Shrine, which is connected to an underground shrine. Takeminakata, who has a body of a snake, comes out of the dragon palace (*ryūgū*) only at the hour of the dragon on the sixteenth day of the tenth month to receive the Buddhist scripture containing the essence of the Buddha's teachings."[17] The primary association between the scripture and the kami was not forgotten as long as the ritual was performed every year.

The other major combinatory ritual at the Suwa Upper Shrine was the Flower Rite (*hana-e*), which was performed on Śākyamuni's birthday, i.e. the eighth day of the fourth month. The monks of the Jingūji led the ritual in the Fugendō, and all the shrine-monks and shrine-priests participated in the ceremony. Like the *Lotus Sutra* Ritual, the Flower Rite had a long history, which probably began with the establishment of Jingūji at the Suwa Shrine. During the medieval period, this rite of the Upper Shrine on Buddha's birthday and the corresponding Nirvana Rite (*jōraku-e*), held at the Lower Shrine on the memorial day of Śākyamuni's death/entrance into nirvana, were the most sumptuous rites of the Suwa Shrine. According to the *Suwa Daimyōjin ekotoba* (1356), abundant food offerings were prepared and piled up in front of the altar of Fugen on the day of the Flower Rite. The climax of the ceremony was a ritualized discussion about the *Lotus Sutra* (*hokke rongi*) in front of the statue of Fugen. After the performance, there was a large procession that consisted of children carrying flower baskets, musicians, shrine-monks, shrine-priests, and representatives of the local villages. They circumambulated the statue three times, which was followed by a performance of classical music and dances (*bugaku*). At the banquet, the shrine-monks and shrine-priests shared the food offerings and rice wine with those who had contributed to the ceremony. It was a lavish communal event in the flowering season. Although the rite became more formalistic during the Edo period, it continued to be one of the main events at the Upper Shrine until 1868.[18]

Funerals of shrine-priests

The close connection between kami and buddhas at the Upper Shrine was also visible in the funerary rites of the shrine-priests. As mentioned earlier,

17 For an explanation of the *Lotus Sutra* Ritual during the Edo period see Imai Masaki (1926), p. 50.

18 On the Flower Rite, see Imai Masaki (1935), pp. 59–62, and Miyasaka Yūshō (1987), pp. 164–8.

the high priests of the shrine, who were parishioners of Hokkeji, had their funerals and memorial rites conducted by the monks of this Zen temple. Through Zen funerary rituals, the high priests who had played the roles of kami in Shinto rituals during their lifetime received posthumous ordination and were led on the path to become buddhas.

Zen funerary rites were adopted by the high priests of the Upper Shrine during the Kamakura period, and continued until 1868. During the Kamakura period, it was common for a head priest to be ordained and become a monk after retirement. One of the early examples was Suwa Morishige, who was an *ōhōri* and had close connections with the Kamakura government as the leader of the samurai in Suwa. According to the history of Hokkeji, Morishige invited the Chinese monk Rankei Dōryū (Ch. Lanxi Daolong, also known in Japan as Daikaku Zenji, 1213–78) from Kamakura, and re-established the originally Tendai temple of Hokkeji ("Lotus Temple") as a Rinzai Zen temple. After he retired as *ōhōri*, Morishige was ordained and received the Buddhist name Renbutsu. In his last days, he expressed the earnest wish to be born in the Pure Land. It was a matter of course for him to have a Buddhist funeral.[19] Five hundred years later, during the late Edo period, the high priests of the Upper Shrine no longer took the tonsure, but continued to receive posthumous ordinations in their funerary rituals. It was mandatory for them to be buried with Buddhist funeral rites by Hokkeji because of the temple registration system (*terauke seido*). As we shall see below, some of the sacerdotal houses tried to become independent from Hokkeji in the early nineteenth century, but their attempts were unsuccessful. According to the necrology of this temple, the high priests of the Upper Shrine who died before 1868 received ordination names (*kaimyō*) of the highest rank, which shows that these shrine-priests remained the major parishioners of Hokkeji, and that their Buddhist funerals were a tradition of the shrine community until the beginning of the Meiji period.[20]

The above survey of the Suwa Upper Shrine illustrates the intricate combination of Buddhism and Shinto at a major cultic center during the late Edo period. The associations between the kami of Suwa and the buddhas/bodhisattvas, which had developed during the medieval period, were preserved in various aspects of its symbols, institutions, and practices. Those who visited the shrine during the early nineteenth century experienced the history of this sacred place as inscribed in the religious landscape.

19 On the history of Hokkeji, see Washio Junkei (1983), p. 451. On Suwa Morishige, see Nagano Kenshi Kankōkai (eds) (1968–92): *Nagano kenshi: tsūshi-hen*, vol. 2: *Chūsei* 1 (1986), pp. 162–4, 449. According to the *Hōnen Shōnin gyōjō eden* ("A pictorial biography of the Pure Land master Hōnen"), Morishige became a devout follower of the Pure Land school in his last years, and wished to be born in Amida's Pure Land (ibid., p. 449).

20 See Hosono Masao (1981), p. 18. The ordination names of the *ōhōri*, *jinchōgan*, and other high priests have the title-suffix *in den daikoji*, which was used exclusively for the most important patrons of the temple such as the lord of the Takashima domain.

Conflicts between the shrine-monks and the shrine-priests

Although the temple and the shrine institutions at the Suwa Upper Shrine were associated with each other, there were certain tensions between them. Since two different types of institutions shared the same ground and resources, there was a conflict of interest. The shrine-monks (*shasō*) and the shrine-priests (*shake*) had frequent disputes over the use of their common ritual space and sources of income. For example, Renchi-in, one of the shrine-temples located inside the main precincts, brought a lawsuit against the *ōhōri* and other shrine-priests in 1752. Their main contentions were as follows:

1 There used to be a platform for the fire ritual (*gomadan*) in front of the Hall of Worship, where the shrine-monks performed prayer rituals on the request of emperors. However, the shrine-priests removed this platform from its original position, and put it outside the central enclosure. Thus, they hindered the shrine-monks from performing fire rituals in front of the kami.
2 The revenues from the lands granted to the Upper Shrine by the shogunate, worth one thousand *koku*, were supposed to be divided evenly between the shrine-monks and the shrine-priests. However, the shrine-priests have regularly taken more than their share. As a result, the shrine-monks have had to depend on the money offerings collected from the offertory boxes in order to observe their ritual duties. Recently, even the offertories have been taken by the shrine-priests.
3 Renchi-in used to be the head shrine-temple (*bettōji*) of the Front Shrine (*maemiya*) of the Upper Shrine complex located in Misayama, and the shrine-monks used to perform rituals there for the bodhisattva Kokūzō (Sk. Ākāśagarbha), who is the original essence of the kami and the main object of worship at that shrine. Disregarding history, the shrine-priests have appropriated the shrine for themselves.

Pointing out these and other changes, Renchi-in maintained that the old customs should be respected and the traditional order should be restored at the religious complex. However, it proved impossible to reverse the early modern development of Shinto at the Upper Shrine, and so Renchi-in lost the case, having to accept the status quo.[21]

As Renchi-in's claims testify, the shrine-priests increased their power over the Suwa complex during the early Edo period, and tried to distance themselves from the temples. The platform of the Shingon fire ritual was removed from its central position during the Genroku era (1688–1704), when the shrine-priests introduced the rituals and doctrines of Yoshida Shinto at the Suwa Shrines. Except for the Pillar Rite and other special communal rites,

21 See Suwa-shi shi hensankai (eds) (1988) (Chūkan: Kinsei), pp. 897–8.

most of the shrine rituals performed by the shrine-priests during the Edo period originated at this time.[22] By the middle of the eighteenth century, the shrine-priests succeeded in establishing a form of early modern Shinto at the Suwa Shrine, which was named Sankō Sōgen Shinto, after Yoshida house's Genpon Sōgen Shinto.[23] This form of Shinto still contained many Buddhist elements, and the combinatory practices continued at the shrine. Yet, its emphasis on Shinto's supremacy fostered disharmony between the shrine-monks and the shrine-priests.

Disputes over funerary rites

The focal point of the struggle between Buddhist and Shinto institutions was the funerary rites of the shrine-priests. Owing to the temple registration system, the shrine-monks of Hokkeji were authorized to perform the funerary rites for the shrine-priests. Exercising this authority, the shrine-monks could demand contributions and co-operation from the latter. As long as the shrine-monks retained this power, they could prevent the shrine-priests from disengaging from Buddhist practices in the Upper Shrine. This control over funerary rites was a crucial advantage for the shrine-monks.

The shrine-priests began to challenge the authority of their funerary temple in the early nineteenth century. When Hokkeji levied monetary contributions from its parishioners in 1806, the Moriya sacerdotal house (*jinchōgan*) and the Itō house (*mane no hōri*) refused to pay, saying that they wished to be removed from the temple registry. The following year, while disputing with Hokkeji about these payments, the Moriya and the Itō houses requested the Yoshida house in Kyoto to grant them a license to perform Shinto funerary rites. This was the beginning of a long struggle concerning the funerary rites at the Upper Shrine that continued until the beginning of the Meiji period.

The funeral dispute attests to the growing influence of Nativist ideology among the Shinto priests. In a letter attached to the petition to the Yoshida house in 1807, the *jinchōgan* Moriya Sanewata wrote:

> [During the ancient period], our shrine had nothing to do with the heretical teachings of nirvana (*itan jakumetsu no oshie*, i.e. Buddhism), and there were Shinto burial rites that had been transmitted since the age of the gods. After the introduction of Buddhism to Japan during the medieval period, however, the divine lands of the shrine diminished as a result of frequent warfare. The shrine-priests

22 See Suwa Kyōikukai (eds) (1966), p. 672.

23 Sugae Masumi (1754–1829) noted the Sankō Sōgen Shinto in his travel diary: see *Suwa no umi*, in *Shinpen Shinano shiryō sōsho*, vol. 10, p. 256. For the relationship between Sankō Sōgen Shinto and Yoshida Shinto, see Gorai Shigeru (1987), pp. 195–6.

> became deluded and came to be affiliated with Buddhist temples just like lay people. All the shrine-priests today consider this [association] deplorable.[24]

Based on this Nativist view of history, the *jinchōgan* tried to get rid of Buddhist funerary rites and restore an idealized pre-Buddhist past. This letter shows that, by the early nineteenth century, some of the shrine-priests had become avowed anti-Buddhists.

In spite of their efforts, the *jinchōgan* and the *mane no hōri* were never granted a license to perform Shinto funerals. Their plan did not work out because the Suwa Shrine came into conflict with the Yoshida house in 1802. During the ensuing years, the sacerdotal houses of the Suwa Shrines tried to become independent from the authority of the Yoshida house, and under such circumstances, it did not agree to grant them this license, without which the *jinchōgan* and the *mane no hōri* could not get permission from the local government (Takashima domain) to introduce Shinto funerals and be removed from the temple registry. They were, therefore, obliged to settle their dispute with Hokkeji in 1809, and promised to pay their dues to the temple.[25]

Although their first attempt failed, these two sacerdotal houses never gave up the hope of introducing Shinto funerals to the shrine. In 1810, they were allowed by the Takashima domain to hold Shinto funerals for shrine-priests and their heirs on the condition that they would get a license from the Yoshida house. However, because of the lack of documents, it is not clear whether they succeeded or not; though, since the Suwa Shrine and the Yoshida house completely severed their relations in 1826, it is unlikely that this requirement was satisfied. In any case, the dispute with Hokkeji continued. When the *jinchōgan* Moriya Sanenobu died in 1854, his heir Saneaki, who evidently did not have the required license from the Yoshida house, nevertheless conducted the Shinto funerary rites for him. Hokkeji immediately protested against this unauthorized funeral.[26] The Takashima domain supported Hokkeji's claim, and ordered the Moriya house to hold Sanenobu's funeral again at Hokkeji. After this incident, Hokkeji and the two sacerdotal houses agreed that the Moriya and the Itō houses would remain to be registered parishioners of the temple until they received a license from a Shinto authority to perform Shinto funerals.[27] The two houses negotiated again with the Yoshida and Yoshikawa houses, but could not obtain this license before 1868. The struggle between the shrine-priests and Hokkeji over the funerary rites thus continued until the first year of the Meiji period.

24 Nagano Kenshi Kankōkai (ed.), 1968–92: *Nagano kenshi kinsei shiryō-hen* 3 (Nanshin chihō) (1983), p. 1161, Document no. 732.

25 Ibid., p. 1162, no. 734.

26 Ibid., p. 1175, no. 744.

27 Ibid., pp. 1175–6, no. 745.

Hirata Nativism in the Suwa Shrine

As the funeral dispute in the Upper Shrine illustrates, tension between the shrine-priests and shrine-monks in the Suwa complex increased toward the end of the Edo period. The most significant factor that contributed to the aggravation of their relationship was the growing influence of Hirata Nativism among the shrine-priests.

The shrine-priests were introduced to Hirata Nativism by Matsuzawa Yoshiaki (1791–1861), a fancy goods (*komamono*) merchant who propagated it in the Ina and Suwa counties. Matsuzawa's house was not far from Suwa Shrine, and he sometimes lectured on Hirata Nativism to the shrine-priests there. Among Matsuzawa's associates was Imai Nobufuru (1818–59), the *ōhōri* of the Suwa Lower Shrine, who was a staunch Nativist and associated with many poets and scholars. He invited disciples of Hirata Atsutane such as Tanaka Ōhide (1776–1847) to teach Nativist Studies to the shrine-priests. Imai himself registered as a student of the Hirata school in 1859.[28] Owing to this radical head priest, the anti-Buddhist teachings of Hirata Atsutane started spreading among the priests of the Lower Shrine. The Upper Shrine also had connections with the Hirata school. Between 1864 and 1866, Satō Kiyoomi (1833–1910), an organizer of the Hirata school, visited the Upper Shrine three times and stayed in the *soe no hōri*'s house, teaching the *Kojiki* and other Shinto classics to the shrine-priests.[29] In this way, Hirata Nativism infiltrated deeply into the Suwa complex by the end of the Edo period.

Under the influence of Hirata Nativism, the shrine-priests became extremely antagonistic toward the shrine-monks. At the Lower Shrine complex, tension reached a critical point in 1864, when the Senjudō hall in the Buddhist quarter was destroyed by a suspicious fire. The hall enshrined a statue of Senju Kannon (Avalokiteśvara with one-thousand hands), which was revered as the original essence of the kami of the Suwa Lower Shrine. The destruction of the most important ritual space in the Buddhist quarter led to a fierce dispute between the shrine-monks and shrine-priests about the cause of the fire and the ownership of the Senjudō. Three years later, in 1867, another suspicious fire destroyed Kanshōji in the Spring Shrine compound of the Lower Shrine. This time, it was rumored that the shrine-priests had set fire to the temple. The cause of the fire was not determined by the authorities, but there are some indications that this rumor was true.[30] In any case, such a rumor spread because the shrine-priests showed great hostility toward Buddhism during the last years of the Edo period.

The local government and the people, however, did not share the anti-Buddhist ideology of the Hirata school. The Takashima domain remained

28 On Imai Nobufuru, see Suwa Kyōikukai (eds) (1966), p. 675.

29 Haga Noboru (1980), pp. 428–35.

30 On these two cases of fire at the Lower Shrine, see Imai Masaki (1935), pp. 63–4; Hayashi Takeo (1978), p. 71.

pro-Tokugawa, and maintained a relatively stable government until 1868. The domain continued to support the traditional institutions and practices of the Suwa Shrine. The peasants in Suwa county were also religiously conservative. In Jingūji village, the shrine-temples were an essential part of the people's religious life. Relying on the authority of the local government and popular support, the shrine-monks continued their Buddhist practices in the Suwa complex.

Shinbutsu bunri at Suwa Shrine

In 1868, the traditional combination of Buddhism and Shinto broke down under the pressure of the Meiji government, resulting in a radical transformation of the religious landscape, institutions, and practices at major cultic centers. By enforcing the dissociation of kami and buddhas/bodhisattvas at famous cultic centers, the Nativist ideologues in the central government demonstrated how the edicts drafted by them should be interpreted and enacted. In Shinano province, the policy was enforced very swiftly and strictly at Suwa Shrine.

The Nativist ideologues chose Suwa Shrine as the primary target of *shinbutsu bunri* in Shinano as it was one of the cultic centers where the Imperial court occasionally ordered prayer rituals (*chokuganjo*), and because it had a large sphere of influence as the principal shrine (*ichi no miya*) of the province and the head shrine of more than five thousand local Suwa shrines throughout Japan.[31] Under the directions of the Office of Rites (Jingi jimukyoku, Jingikan),[32] the dissociation was carried out in the first year of the Meiji period (1868), becoming the earliest and the most complete case of *shinbutsu bunri* in Shinano province.[33]

The shrine-priests of the Suwa complex acted as the local agents of the Nativist ideologues in the new government. After the Restoration of Imperial Rule was proclaimed in the twelfth month of 1867, these priests who had been influenced by Hirata Nativism participated in the military and ideological campaigns of the new government, and during the Boshin Civil War (1868–9),

31 On the nationwide distribution of Suwa shrines in Japan, see Nagano kenshi kankōkai (eds) (1968–92) *Tsūshi-hen*, vol. 2: *Chūsei* 1 (1986), p. 497. See also *Onbashira matsuri to Suwa Taisha*, pp. 8–9. In the neighboring provinces, such as Echigo (Niigata) and Kai (Yamanashi), more than one-fifth of local shrines were Suwa shrines. Acording to Ichimura Minato (1934, p. 184), more than one-third of local shrines in southern Shinano were Suwa shrines. The record of the early Meiji survey of Shinto shrines (*Jinja meisaichō*) lists 424 village shrines in Ina county, of which 150 were Suwa shrines, and 127 were Hachiman shrines.

32 The Office of Rites (Jingi jimukyoku, lit. "Office of the Kami of Heaven and Earth") became the Department of Rites (Jingikan) on the twenty-first of the intercalary fourth month.

33 Cf. Imai Masaki (1935); Washio Junkei (1983); Hayashi Takeo (1978); Hosono Masao (1981, 1982).

twenty-five of them formed a paramilitary group and pretentiously called themselves the *Kangun Jingitai* ("The troop of the kami of heaven and earth in the Imperial Army"). When the new government issued the dissociation edicts, the shrine-priests co-operated with the Nativist ideologues in the Office of Rites to remove everything related to Buddhism from the Suwa complex.

The local government of Suwa, on the other hand, was reluctant to enforce the separation edicts. The Takashima domain was loyal to the Tokugawa shogunate, and did not pledge allegiance to the new government until the third month of 1868, when troops of the "Imperial Forces" passed Suwa on their way to Edo. Like other domains in Shinano province, the Takashima domain was reprimanded by the new government for being slow in switching allegiances. When the domain received the dissociation edicts from Kyoto, the troops of the new government had not yet won a decisive victory over the pro-Tokugawa forces in Edo, and therefore it responded ambivalently to the order. The officials conveyed the edicts to the priests and monks of Suwa Shrine, but did not take the initiative in enforcing them. At the initial stage, the Takashima domain waited to see the development of the civil war while gathering information about the new government in Kyoto. Without a commitment of the local government, the shrine-priests could not force the shrine-monks to obey the order from Kyoto, and thus, the dissociation edicts did not take effect immediately at Suwa Shrine.

The intervention by the Office of Kami of Heaven and Earth (Jingikan)

Things began to change after strong intervention by the Office of Rites, which was informed of the situation in Suwa by a group of shrine-priests who went to Kyoto to ask for government help. On the twenty-ninth day of the fourth month, Juge Shigekuni (1817–1911), an undersecretary of this office, summoned a representative of the Takashima domain and the group of shrine-priests to his office. According to the record of this meeting, he reprimanded them sternly (*kibishiku ōse watasare*):

> Suwa Shrine holds the same rank (*shakaku*) as that of Izumo Shrine, and the Imperial court has paid special reverence to the kami of Suwa. On several occasions, emperors have ordered prayer rituals to be performed at the shrine. Considering the special characteristics of the shrine, everything associated with Buddhism, from halls and pagodas to ritual implements, must be removed from its precincts. The lord of the domain and the priests of the shrine must thoroughly understand the current [government policy of] "Great Cleansing" (*goissen*), and attend to its prompt execution.[34]

34 *Jōrenji monjo,* quoted in Imai Masaki (1935), pp. 98–9, n. 21.

The authoritative voice of this government official had a strong impact on the delegates from Suwa, who humbly received his order (*osore tatematsuri ouke mōsu*). Juge Shigekuni was a radical Shinto priest of Hie Shrine at the eastern foot of Mount Hiei, and had been appointed to his position at the Office of Rites thanks to his connection with Iwakura Tomomi (1825–83), one of the oligarchs of the new government. Juge had participated in the drafting of the dissociation edicts and wielded his authority to enforce them. On the first day of the fourth month, only three days after the promulgation of the second of these edicts, he had led a band of fanatic Nativists to the Hie Shrine complex, and violently enforced the decree, removing everything related to buddhas/bodhisattvas from the shrines and destroyed it. Juge was said to have screamed with delight when he shot an arrow through the wooden statue of Buddha that had been enshrined as the main object of worship. Under his direction, all inflammable things had been piled up and burned.[35] When the representatives from Suwa received Juge's order, they must have been reminded of this sensational implementation of the separation edicts at Hie Shrine. They took Juge's order seriously as he gave them the following directive bearing the government seal, and warned that his office might send inspectors (*kanzatsushi*) to check on their progress:

> 1 Remove all the halls and pagodas of the shrine-temples promptly.
>
> 2 Survey the halls and pagodas in the shrine's precincts [beforehand], and make a list of them.
>
> As for the renowned halls, pagodas, and other places of historical interest, investigate them thoroughly, and send a report to this office along with drawings of each item.
>
> 3 If shrine-monks who have renounced Buddhism choose to become Shinto priests, they should come to Kyoto and apply for permission with the authorities.
>
> 4 When the shrine-monks return to secular life, matters concerning the parishioners of their temples should be handled properly.[36]

This intervention by a government office in Kyoto obliged the Takashima domain to start the separation of "Buddhism" and "Shinto" at the Suwa complex. Following the directive, the officials of the domain began to survey the halls and pagodas of the shrine-temples. However, they prolonged the investigations indefinitely, and did not proceed to remove the halls and pagodas. The shrine-priests asked impatiently for permission to demolish these Buddhist structures, but the domain refused, using the investigation as the excuse.

35 On Juge Shigekuni and the iconoclasm at Hie Shrine, see Tamamuro Fumio (1977), pp. 154–67; Yasumaru Yoshio (1979), pp. 52–7; Ketelaar (1990), pp. 9–10.

36 *Jōrenji monjo,* quoted in Imai Masaki (1935), p. 99, n. 22.

The shrine-monks stopped their daily services for the kami on the twentieth day of the intercalary fourth month of 1868, when the Takashima domain told them about Juge's order. The discontinuation of their ritual practices was the first substantial change at Suwa Shrine after the proclamation of the separation edicts. However, the shrine-monks did not give up their institutions while the Takashima domain was in charge and co-operated with the domain in the survey of the shrine-temples, ignoring the order to renounce their monkhood.

The inspectors from the Jingikan

The passive resistance by the domain and the shrine-monks was defeated by a group of inspectors (*kanzatsushi*) from the Department of Rites (Jingikan), who arrived in Suwa on the fifteenth day of the sixth month. The inspectors, Tomi Nigio and three other obscure Nativists, came ostentatiously as delegates from the imperial court and stayed at the residence of the *ōhōri* of the Upper Shrine. Overriding the authority of the Takashima domain, they issued direct orders for the implementation of the separation edicts at the Suwa complex. They reprimanded the shrine-priests and shrine-monks for neglecting the government's orders, and pressed the prelates of the four shrine-temples to sign an agreement for the removal of all Buddhist halls, pagodas, and statues from the Upper Shrine. Consulting with the Takashima domain, the monks tried to defer the submission of such documents, but the adamant inspectors did not allow any further delay. In the evening of the eighteenth day of the sixth month, they forced the head monks to sign the agreement and secured a document necessary for the laicization of the shrine-monks. Thus, exercising imperial authority, the inspectors completed the necessary paperwork to abolish the shrine-temples in just three days.

With the legal formalities taken care of, the inspectors immediately proceeded with the removal of Buddhist symbols from the complex. They gave the shrine-monks only one night to move statues, scriptures, and ritual implements out of the halls and pagodas that were to be demolished the following day. However, it was impossible to remove everything from the many halls in only one night. The Fugendō in the Upper Shrine alone contained at least eighteen statues including the main image of the bodhisattva Fugen sitting on an elephant. The shrine-monks worked all night in candlelight in order to save as many icons as possible. It was their last duty as monks, since their laicization was to take effect on the following day.

Under the supervision of the inspectors, the demolition of the halls and pagodas began the following morning, though this did not go smoothly because the peasants who were levied from the local villages to do the work refused to destroy the sacred structures of the temples. Unable to make them work, the shrine-priests decided to carry out the destruction themselves. Without changing their formal attire, they began desecrating the halls and

pagodas. In the Upper Shrine complex, they first started devastating the Iron Pagoda which was regarded as the body of the kami. The symbol of the association between kami and buddhas/bodhisattvas had to be removed first from the inner sanctum of the shrine, after which they destroyed the halls inside the main precincts, such as the Yakushidō, Gomadō, Daihannyadō, Fudōson, Nyohōdō, and Nyohō-in. The magnificent five-storied pagoda and the Fugendō on the south-eastern hillside were also desecrated. The shrine-priests gave vent to their long-standing grudge against the shrine-temples by damaging these treasured structures. Their behavior was "really violent and outrageous," according to the diary of the head monk of Hokkeji.[37] The violence continued for two days while the inspectors stayed in Suwa. However, since the shrine-priests neither had an orderly plan nor enough laborers, the physical damage they caused was limited. Partially destroyed halls and pagodas remained in the precincts after the Takashima domain suspended the demolition.

Although the demolition was incomplete, the inspectors had fulfilled their mission at the Suwa complex. During their one-week stay, the Nativist officials had laicized the shrine-monks and removed all Buddhist statues, sutras and ritual implements from the enclosures of both the Upper and Lower Shrines. Using the shrine-priests, they had desecrated the halls and pagodas of the shrine-temples and the long tradition of institutional integration of shrines and temples at Suwa had been terminated by the intrusion of state power.

Peasants' resistance against **shinbutsu bunri**

For the people in Suwa county, the separation of kami and buddhas/bodhisattvas at Suwa Shrine was a shocking event. Except for a small group of Hirata Nativists and the shrine-priests, nobody expected the halls and pagodas to be removed from the religious complex. The shrine-temples had been an integral part of Suwa Shrine, and the buddhas and bodhisattvas enshrined in the halls and pagodas were revered by pilgrims as well as local people. When the inspectors from the Jingikan enforced their destruction, the peasants were appalled at this impious order and organized extensive resistance.

Their reaction against the dissociation was recorded in the diaries of the headman of Jingūji village and of the administrator of the shrine.[38] On the first day of the demolition (the nineteenth day of the sixth month), all the peasants in the villages of Jingūji, Takashima, and Miyatawatashi were levied for work

37 *Tōjū Shoyō nikkiroku*, entry for 1868.6.19; quoted in Imai Masaki (1935), pp. 107–8, n. 30.

38 Kasahara Goemon, *Nennai shoji nikki oboechō*, and Itō Shuzen, *Goyōnikki*, cited in Washio Junkei (1983), pp. 463–7.

at the Upper Shrine. They were called at a day's notice and without much explanation about the nature of the work. When they were told to dismantle the halls and pagodas, the peasants grew restless. Disobeying the order, they held a meeting inside the shrine's precincts, and decided to refuse. The residents of Jingūji village were especially concerned about the fate of the shrine-temples with which they had close ties, and when a group of obedient peasants from Takashima village tried to begin the demolition work, the strikers threatened to kill them and scared them away. The resistance of the corvée laborers significantly hindered the inspectors and the shrine-priests from dismantling the buildings.

Residents in Suwa county were quickly united against the destruction of shrine-temples. Within a day, peasants who were determined to save the halls and pagodas circulated a blood-sealed appeal and organized countywide resistance. In response to the appeal, meetings were held in villages and towns throughout the county. The headman of Jingūji village wrote in his diary that he had heard various disquieting rumors that evening. On the second day of the demolition, about 500 peasants were levied again, but they refused to carry out the demolition and confronted the inspectors and shrine-priests. According to the laicized head monk of Nyohō-in, "the peasants from the villages in the domains of Suwa Shrine were extremely angry, and there were indications that they might start rioting."[39]

The resistance of the peasants was supported by the headmen and the officials of the neighboring villages, who were concerned about the situation in the Upper Shrine complex. The village leaders did not want the sacrilegious corvée work to go ahead, especially when the rice was about to ear in the paddy fields. More than thirty village leaders came to see the demolition site, and complained to the minor official of the Takashima domain who was reluctantly overseeing the corvée work. The local official agreed with the village leaders, and advised them to file a petition at the office of the county magistrate in order to suspend demolition. Following this advice, thirty-seven villages jointly filed a petition. The extensive resistance of the local people was effective, and the inspectors left Suwa the following morning without completing the destruction. Although they ordered the Takashima domain to continue the work, the domain suspended it until after the harvest season.

During this time, the local peasants continued their efforts to save the edifices from destruction. However, since the removal of these structures had been officially decided upon, the only way to save them from complete demolition was to dismantle them orderly and reconstruct them elsewhere. When the Takashima domain finally began drawing up dismantling plans in the eighth month, the peasants of Jingūji village asked the domain to hand over all the structures that were to be removed from the Upper Shrine complex. They selected a suitable place in their village and offered to pay the costs of

39 *Jōrenji monjo,* quoted in Imai Masaki (1935), p. 101, n. 25.

removal, reconstruction, and the maintenance of the shrine-temples, promising to continue the traditional Buddhist rites at the new site. When the domain office hesitated, the leaders of the village offered to pay the considerable sum of 500 *ryō* for the most renowned buildings and their appurtenances: the Fugendō, the five-storied pagoda, the bell tower, Niō's gates, and a couple of large bronze lanterns.[40] In spite of this earnest request from the villagers, these structures were not given to Jingūji village, for Suwa Shrine had come under the direct jurisdiction of the Jingikan by the end of the ninth month,[41] and it did not allow the villagers to reconstruct the buildings that had been the symbols of the association beween the kami and buddhas/bodhisattvas. The only structure that they were allowed to remove and reconstruct in their village was the Yakushidō, the hall of Medicine Buddha. All the efforts of the villagers could not save the five-storied pagoda and other symbolic structures from destruction.

When the Takashima domain resumed demolition in the last month of 1868, the peasants accepted the order with resigned obedience, and the workers from Mashino village undertook the dismantling of the Fugendō and the five-storied pagoda. Other halls in the precincts of the Upper Shrine were dismantled by laborers from Jingūji village. When the magnificent five-storied pagoda was finally dismantled, crowds of people gathered in the Upper Shrine and lamented the fate of this religious landmark, without sabotaging the work.[42] The absence of organized resistance this time indicated the penetration into local society of the power and authority of the Meiji government.

Changes in the religious landscape

The edifices of the shrine-temples were erased from the enclosures of Suwa Shrine by the end of the first year of the Meiji period. The exact number of the dismantled structures is not known, but at least twenty-seven buildings at the Upper Shrine and fifteen at the Lower Shrine disappeared as the result of the separation edicts. The statues and the ritual implements taken out from these halls and pagodas were destroyed, sold, or transferred to other temples in the neighboring area.[43] The remaining structures were "cleansed" of the objects that suggested their former association with buddhas/bodhisattvas. The Iron Pagoda, which had been in the inner sanctum of the Upper Shrine as the body of the kami, was taken out and abandoned outside the shrine, though it was later moved to the Onsenji temple in Kamisuwa.

40 Hosono Masao (1982), p. 30.

41 See Suwa Kyōikukai (eds) (1966), p. 717. On the twenty-third day of the ninth month, the Takashima domain informed the *ōhōri* of the Upper Shrine that Suwa Shrine was now directly governed by the Jingikan.

42 On the demolition of the five-storied pagoda, see Washio Junkei (1983), p. 469.

43 For a list of the demolished structures, see Imai Masaki (1935), pp. 124–31.

The elaborate sculptures of elephant trunks that had bedecked the Hall of Worship were removed and destroyed. Not only the visual but also the auditory and olfactory indications of Buddhism were expunged from the cultic center: the sound of the bells and the smell of incense vanished from the precincts. The large bell outside the Fugendō of the Upper Shrine that had reverberated over Lake Suwa every day since 1296 was demolished and sold to a metal merchant in Matsumoto. In this manner, by eradicating the history and culture of the complex, a pristine environment of modern Shinto was artificially created at Suwa Shrine.

Changes in the practices

The ritual practices at the shrines also changed fundamentally as a result of *shinbutsu bunri* as those based on the combination of the kami and buddhas/bodhisattvas were abolished. At the Upper Shrine, the shrine-monks discontinued their sutra chanting in front of the kami on the twentieth day of the intercalary fourth month of 1868. In the following month, the monks of Hokkeji ceased their monthly offering of tea to the kami. The shrine's major festivals of Buddhist origin, such as the Flower Rite and the *Lotus Sutra* Ritual, were also discontinued.

After receiving a licence to perform Shinto rituals from the Shirakawa house, the laicized monks (now Shinto priests) tried to resume their traditional rites by simply changing their vestments, ritual implements, and liturgical texts. They submitted a petition to the Jingikan maintaining that their rituals of "Ryōbu (Dual) Shinto" could be transformed into those of "Yuiitsu (One-and-Only) Shinto," and thus rendered suitable for the new Upper Shrine. However, the shrine-priests strongly opposed this move, arguing that the rituals that had been performed by the shrine-monks had nothing to do with Shinto. After two years of dispute, the former shrine-monks gave up their attempt, and the rituals based on the old combinatory religiosity were eliminated from the liturgical calendar of the Upper Shrine all together.[44]

The other conspicuous change during the early Meiji period was the introduction of Shinto funerals (*shinsōsai*). Since 1807, the priests of the Upper Shrine had attempted unsuccessfully to introduce Shinto funerary rites. Their wish was finally fulfilled in the first year of Meiji, when, on the nineteenth day of the intercalary fourth month, the new government issued a decree specifically concerning the Shinto funerary rites: "From now on, the funerals of Shinto priests and their family members are to be observed according to the Shinto funerary rites."

44 This dispute is recorded in "Suwa kamisha shajin shasō-fukushokusha shinji tsutomekata deiri shajin hentōsho," in Nagano Kenshi Kankōkai (ed.) (1968–92), *Kindai shiryō-hen* 1, pp. 1118–21, no. 963.

Institutional changes

Although the government stated that the dissociation of kami and buddhas/bodhisattvas was not a rejection of Buddhism, within shrine-temple multiplexes, the dissociation meant an eradication of their Buddhist institutions. At Suwa Shrine, the following seven shrine-temples and twelve sub-temples that existed at the beginning of 1868 were completely destroyed:

Upper Shrine Complex (*Kamisha Honmiya*)
1 Jingūji, Fugen jinpenzan (Shingon school)
2 Nyohō-in, Himitsuzan (Shingon school)
3 Renchi-in, Shichitōzan (Shingon school)
4 Hokkeji, Shūhōzan (Tendai → Rinzai school)
Sub-temples (*in*, *bō*):
(1) Jintō-in,
(2) Shitsugyō-bō,
(3) Hōzō-bō,
(4) Renjō-bō,
(5) Gyokuzō-bō,
(6) Shōrin-bō,
(7) Senzō-bō,
(8) Zenshō-bō

Lower Shrine Complex (*Shimosha*)
Autumn Shrine (*Akimiya*)
5 Jingūji, Kaiganzan (Shingon school)
Sub-temples:
(9) Hōju-in,
(10) Hongaku-bō
6 Sanseiji, Shōrinzan (Shingon school)
Spring Shrine (*Harumiya*)
7 Kanshōji, Wakōzan (Shingon school)
Sub-temples:
(11) Tōkō-bō,
(12) Hōzō-bō

After the elimination of these temples, the priestly order of Suwa Shrine was reorganized. Initially, the laicized monks became Shinto priests and tried to continue serving the kami. They adopted secular names, stopped shaving their heads, and changed their vestments to those of Shinto priests. As directed by the Jingikan, they received the license to perform Shinto rituals from the Shirakawa Jingihaku house, whose records show that the prelates of the abolished shrine-temples enrolled in the house in late 1868.[45] The new Shinto

45 Kondō Yoshihiro (ed.) (1972), pp. 522–3.

priests, however, could not get along with the shrine-priests who had gained the upper hand with the separation edicts. Their hostile relationship was epitomized in a dispute over the seating order at the Upper Shrine. Before *shinbutsu bunri*, when the shrine-monks and shrine-priests participated in the same rite, they sat in parallel rows after the *ōhōri*. According to an edict issued by the Office of Rites on the nineteenth day of the intercalary fourth month of 1868, the seating was to remain the same if the laicized monks became Shinto priests. The shrine-priests, however, tried to move the seats of the former monks to the lower end of the Shinto ranks. The prelates of the abolished shrine-temples protested against this change and filed a complaint with the Jingikan. The dispute continued for two years, but in the end, the former monks had to accept an inferior position after the five high priests.[46] As this case illustrates, it was difficult and often humiliating for the laicized monks to remain at the shrine, and soon, they gave up their priesthood and left.

Although the shrine-priests succeeded in ousting the former shrine-monks, their own sacerdotal tradition also came to an end as a consequence of *shinbutsu bunri*. In May 1871, the Meiji government instituted a hierarchy of State Shinto shrines, and nationalized the major provincial ones. Suwa Shrine became one of the Intermediate State Shrines (*kokuhei chūsha*). As an obstacle to centralization, hereditary succession of Shinto priests was abolished. The *ōhōri*, who had been revered as the descendant of the kami of Suwa, was stripped of his divine status and replaced by a new head priest (*gūji*) sent by the central government. The five high priests of the local sacerdotal houses were also replaced by "official priests" (*shinkan*) appointed by the government.[47] Thus, not only the lineages of the shrine-monks, but also those of the shrine-priests were terminated in the first years of the Meiji period. When the official priests of State Shinto replaced the hereditary shrine-priests, the elimination of the last remnants of Buddhist-Shinto interactions at Suwa Shrine was completed.

In this way, Suwa Shrine, which had been a sacred site for both the kami of Suwa and their Buddhist counterparts for almost a thousand years, was transformed irreversibly at the initial stage of Japan's modernization by the Meiji government. The Buddhist influence was eradicated, and its role was taken over by the newly created State Shinto. As a consequence of these momentous and lasting changes, beliefs, symbols, institutions, and practices related to pre-modern combinatory religiosity at Suwa were also radically transformed, if not completely annihilated.

46 On the seating order dispute, see Suwa-shi shi Hensankai (eds) (1988), vol. 2: Kinsei, pp. 554–7.

47 For details on the nationalization of the Suwa Shrines, see Suwa Kyōikukai (eds) (1986), vol. 5, pp. 87–8.

12

DANCING THE DOCTRINE

Honji suijaku thought in *kagura* performances*

Irit Averbuch

In order to transmit his doctrine to the multitude of sentient beings, the Buddha preached his principle of *upāya*, skillful means. This principle stands behind the doctrinal claim, found especially in Mahayanic scriptures, that the Dharma can be taught not only through language but by means of all the senses, even directly from mind to mind. The idea of translating the Dharma into physical manifestations, among them dance and drama, is thus very old in Buddhism, and has been expressed in a rich variety of Buddhist arts and rituals throughout the ages.[1] This chapter traces the influence of esoteric Buddhist ideas on the deep structure of the native Japanese *kagura* dance tradition. I will try to illustrate here how a complicated Buddhist doctrine like that of esoteric Buddhism was preached to the common people through the non-verbal medium of dance.

Mikkyō and Shugendō

The idea and practice of transmitting the Dharma by non-verbal means have been taken up by Shingon and Tendai, the two Japanese schools of esoteric Buddhism (*mikkyō*)[2] in which the physical dimension of ritual was particularly emphasized. In accordance with the teachings of Shingon's patriarch Kūkai, colorful and musical rituals rich in performative aspects have worked to spread Mikkyō teachings in Japan.[3]

* An earlier version of this chapter appeared in *Tenri Journal of Religion* 27 (March 1999), pp. 143–67.

1 Jerstad (1969), pp. 54–70; Keith (1924).
2 The term Mikkyō refers to the esoteric Buddhist strands of both the Shingon and Tendai variety. Though I discuss here the more acknowledged Shingon influence on our case study of *kagura*, the term Mikkyō is to be taken in its original, more general meaning.
3 Ienaga (1986), pp. 200, 234, 265–73.

In Mikkyō terms, reality is understood as the unity of the principles of Wisdom and Compassion, depicted as the Diamond and Womb realms or mandalas.[4] As described in some detail in the introduction to this volume, Mikkyō ritual and doctrine were brought to bear on native kami cults from an early date. One of the main protagonists of this amalgamation trend was the eclectic Shugendō movement, which combined Mikkyō with autochthonous kami beliefs and Chinese Yin-Yang cosmology and magic practices. The *yamabushi* or mountain ascetics, the practitioners of Shugendō, were the proponents of a doctrine that declared that physical experience brings spiritual results.[5]

According to Shugendō, Kūkai's doctrinal aspiration of "becoming a buddha in this very body" (*sokushin jōbutsu*) is to be achieved through ascetic practice. The *yamabushi*, who are mainly concerned with the physical pursuit of spiritual, as well as tangible, magical power, thus chose asceticism as their way. They became the sorcerers, healers, exorcists, and local priests in charge of fertility rites of rural Japan and, inspired by esoteric Buddhism, they produced the spectacular rituals for which they are famous.[6] The *yamabushi* are often credited with having popularized Buddhism, and especially the Mikkyō variety, in Japan. One of the most widespread ways in which the *yamabushi* did this is through the performing arts.[7] The *yamabushi* have thus deeply influenced not only the Japanese folk religious world-view and ritual practices, but also the numerous forms of the folk performing arts.[8]

What directed the *yamabushi* towards the performing arts was the central concept of *gen*, or magical powers gained through asceticism.[9] *Gen* is acquired as a direct result of the austerities undergone by the *yamabushi*, and forms their professional qualification. It is his *gen* that gives the *yamabushi* the shamanic capability to communicate with and draw on the power of kami and buddhas. *Gen* also endows the *yamabushi* with magical mastery over fire, water, and swords. *Yamabushi* often conduct rites of "displaying *gen*" to demonstrate their magical abilities to their parishioners. These rites include manipulating mudras (hand-signs) and magical steps (*henbai*), as well as drumming and reciting sutras and mantras. These techniques have given rise to acrobatic and entertaining performances, and thus to the development of what is now known as the folk performing arts (*minzoku geinō*). As early as the late Kamakura period, the *yamabushi* embraced the performing arts as one way to propagate their own world-view and enact their rites; historically, this coincides with the spread of the *honji suijaku* paradigm and, indeed, of the Shugendō movement itself. Their involvement in the arts was also due

4 Yamasaki (1988), pp. 123–51.

5 Miyake (1971), pp. 5–6.

6 Hori (1958); Earhart (1970), pp. 153–6; Miyake (1971, 1978, 1985).

7 Gorai (1980a), pp. 400–22 and 424 (1976).

8 Miyake (1984), (1985), pp. 198–206; pp. 924–9; Gorai Shigeru (ed.) (1980b).

9 Miyake (1985), pp. 921–56.

to their closeness to the common people and their folk traditions, which provided the demand for *yamabushi* performances, as well as their subjects.[10]

Of special note is the variety of ritual dance forms carrying the stamp of Shugendō. Dance was a major tool for the *yamabushi* to expound their ideas and enliven their rituals. In some areas, Shugendō rituals still include magical dances, often danced in a state of trance, as part of the rite itself.[11]

Kagura

Of the traditional ritual dance forms in Japan, the one that is most obviously influenced by Shugendō is *kagura*. *Kagura* is the oldest known type of music and dance performance in Japan, naturally and historically connected with the celebrations of kami *matsuri*. It is even considered to be *matsuri*'s most ancient form.[12] Today, however, "kagura" is used as a collective name for the most ancient genre of the folk performing arts.[13]

The characters forming the word "kagura" can be read as "entertainment for the kami," or "kami music," but most agree that "kagura" is a contracted form of *kami no kura* or "seat of the kami," implying the presence of kami in the *kagura* performance itself.[14] Tradition connects the origin of *kagura* to the myth of "Opening the Rock-Cave Door" (*iwatobiraki*), recorded in the *Kojiki* and the *Nihon shoki*. This myth describes how the sun-goddess Amaterasu Ōmikami was lured out of the heavenly cave, where she had hidden herself. At the climax of an elaborate ritual, the goddess Ame no Uzume performed a shamanic dance in front of the cave, a dance which stirred the sun-goddess to open the door and allowed the other gods to pull her out. This ritual dance of revitalization, later combined with the rites of spirit pacification (*chinkon*), was called *kagura*.[15]

10 Gorai (1976), pp. 197–200 and 262–4; Gorai (ed.) (1980b), p. 4.

11 Such is the *kashō-barai* (or the *hiwatari*) rite at Akiba-san, Ryōkakuin, in Itabashi, Odawara. There are other cases of "dancing doctrine" known in the Buddhist world: for example, the Tibetan 'Cham drama and the Nepalese Mani Rimdu performance in which the Dharma is transmitted to the people through dance. See Jerstad (1969); Fantin (1976). It is interesting to compare this with the *kagura* (see below). The Japanese Buddhist dance tradition of *nenbutsu odori* differs from these examples in that it does not display the doctrine itself, and will therefore not be discussed in this context: Gorai (1966).

12 Iwata (1992), pp. 427–9.

13 Scholars distinguish between *mikagura* or imperial *kagura* (performed at court and at major shrines), and folk *kagura*.

14 Orikuchi (1975), vol. 17, p. 250; Ishizuka (1984), pp. 272–3; Nishitsunoi (1979), pp. 99–102.

15 The word *kagura* is thus a relatively late appellation for the imperial ritual of *chinkon* recorded since the early Heian period: Nishitsunoi (1979), pp. 99–102. *Chinkon* was a funerary ritual for strengthening the soul of a dying person, related to the rite of "shaking the spirit," performed to call back the departed soul. Shaking was believed to have an energizing effect, hence the essential role of dance: Raz (1981), p. 14; Iwata (1990), pp. 32–50; (1992), pp. 129–30. On *chinkon* and the influences of esoteric Buddhism on it, see Ōbayashi

The *iwatobiraki* myth describes a shamanic ritual, and Ame no Uzume's dance is understood as a dance of possession. Several shamanic elements in the myth were incorporated into later Shinto ritual and into *kagura*. One is the *torimono,* or "hand-held props."[16] The *torimono* serve as "channeling devices" that attract the kami spirits to descend and lead them through to the body of the shamaness, and also as a means to activate their power. Other elements include stamping the feet, a magical means to pacify the spirits of the earth, also understood as a sign of possession. Dance itself served both to induce trance and as the contextual manifestation of it, that is, the possession of the dancer by the kami.

A *kagura* performance can constitute a *matsuri* on its own.[17] It became a rite to expel evil spirits, to bring in benevolent kami for rejuvenation, and to ask for their advice and protection. *Kagura* also became the term for the performance of dance and music as part of local *matsuri*.[18] The ritual performance of *kagura* absorbed many imported influences through time: from the Gigaku and Bugaku arts of the Nara period, to the Sarugaku arts and Buddhist rites of the Heian period. Since the Middle Ages, folk *kagura* has spread throughout Japan under the influence of Shugendō, which introduced masked drama, magical rites, and warrior dances.[19]

Folk *kagura* is generally divided into various genres. *Miko kagura,* the oldest and rarest type, is danced by women at certain kami shrines. *Ise kagura* is a collective name for a variety of rituals, among them *yudate* (boiling water) rites of Shugendō origin. It includes masked dances and dialogues with masked kami, and is conducted on a temporary stage under a decorated canopy. *Izumo kagura* shares the same features, but also includes unmasked *torimono* dances, and "sacred Nō," or dramatic masked dances based on myths. The itinerant *shishi* or *yamabushi kagura* tradition of northeastern Japan combines the old *kagura* rites and mythical stories with Shugendō lore and practice.[20]

In this chapter I shall illustrate how Mikkyō influence is manifested in the deep structure of a particular form of *yamabushi kagura* dance. In doing so I do not intend to argue that Mikkyō is significant for understanding the nature or essence of the folk tradition itself, for on the folk level, Buddhism, kami cults and Yin-Yang cosmology have been mixed to a degree beyond

(1984); Miyata (1984); Orikuchi (1975), vol. 17, pp. 250–71; Iwata (1990), pp. 31–81, (1992); Ishizuka (1984); Honda (1966).

16 Originally natural objects like leaves and branches, they later included artefacts like *gohei*, swords, fans, and bells: Nishitsunoi (1979), p. 98; Takatori (1969).

17 Yamaji (1987), p. 222.

18 Hoff (1983).

19 On the history and development of *kagura*, see for example, Honda (1966); Iwata (1983), (1990), (1992); Hoff (1978), (1983).

20 These genres are scholarly labels coined by the late Prof. Honda Yasuji, and are here used for convenience's sake. There are other classifications. See Nishitsunoi (1979), pp. 65–9.

separation, and have even evolved into an independent form of tradition. However, for the historian of religion in general, and especially from the point of view of the history of Japanese Buddhism, it is interesting to trace the mechanism of cultural penetration, the mechanism by which a tradition such as Buddhism infiltrated into a different cultural milieu. It is also important to understand its measure of success in doing so. For, as I already mentioned, *kagura* is instinctively seen by most Japanese as an ancient kami tradition, not commonly related to Buddhism, and the word *kagura* does not evoke any Buddhist connotations. Nevertheless, Buddhist influence can be recognized in most *kagura* forms in Japan, through the medium of Shugendō.[21]

In the following pages I will try to illustrate, however briefly, how a Mikkyō world-view is implicitly embedded in the *kagura*. I will first present this aspect as seen through a few examples of *kagura* traditions representative of the genres of *Ise* and *Izumo kagura*, and then concentrate on a particular case study: the Take school of Hayachine Kagura, from the genre designated as *yamabushi kagura*.

Kagura and Shugendō

When we look closely at the different *kagura* genres, we find that aside from the ancient *miko kagura* and a few other exceptions, most *kagura* schools in Japan are deeply influenced by Shugendō, and therefore by *honji suijaku* thought. Shugendō influence is commonly displayed through its characteristic blending of esoteric Buddhist and Yin-Yang doctrines and practices with kami traditions. Aspects of this combination of Buddhist and kami traditions are still visible in performances today, even after the intervention of the Meiji authorities and their attempts at "shintoizing" local, Shugendō-inspired rituals and folk performing arts.

However, the Shugendō mark is not seen in the contents of the *kagura* plays or dances, nor in the divine characters it embodies; rather, it is to be found in the general settings: the stage, the canopy and the decorations, the headdresses, the props and the costumes; and in some aspects of the *kagura*'s ritual forms.

The influence of Shugendō on *kagura* performances is so prevalent that a complete survey of it would require volumes;[22] here, I shall mention only a

21 There are several examples of explicitly Buddhist folk performing arts in Japan. For example, the Dainichidō Bugaku of Hachimantai, Kazuno, in Akita prefecture, performed annually on January 2, in which golden buddha masks dance in specific patterns around the stage. In another example from Nara prefecture, Yamato Kōriyama, Kongōsanji, a Buddhist procession called *neri kuyō* is performed, in which masks of buddhas and bodhisattvas are paraded. Historically, *ennen mai* or the "dance of longevity" accompanied certain major Buddhist rites, and a form of it is still extant, for example, in Mōtsuji in Hiraizumi, Iwate prefecture.

22 E.g. Miyake (1984); Gorai (ed.) (1980b).

few examples. Representative of Shugendō influence is the widespread type of *yudate kagura*.[23] The ritual of *yudate* is a Shugendō practice of magical and shamanic potency. In the boiling water the opposing elements of fire and water are united, just as the two aspects of Wisdom and Compassion, or the Diamond and Womb mandalas, are ultimately unified.[24] The deities are summoned into the cauldron of boiling water, and their blessings are sprinkled on the parishioners. *Yudate kagura* rites often appear in combination with shamanic oracles (*takusen*), as, for example, in Kuromori Kagura of northeastern Japan, in Ōmoto Kagura on the Japan Sea coast, and in Hanamatsuri in central Japan.

Shugendō influence on *kagura* performances is most conspicuous in the setting of the stage, especially in those *kagura* traditions that construct a canopy (*tengai*) above the stage, such as Ōmoto Kagura, Hanamatsuri, and Shiiba Kagura of central Kyushu.[25] There are many kinds of *kagura* canopies; while some are stationary, others are manipulated by strings and made to prance above the stage. They all represent the constructed path for the kami to descend to the *kagura* stage. Usually, the canopies are made of paper cuttings of five colors. Canopies are often supplemented with five-colored *gohei* placed in the focal space of the altar, or on the four corners of the stage and in the canopy above. The five colors correspond to the five elements, the five directions, and the five buddhas of Mikkyō, and they represent the combined Yin-Yang/Buddhist paradigm of the cosmos manifested in the *kagura* stage, the "seat of the kami."

Another example of kami-Buddhist ritual combination can be seen in the *kagura torimono*. The *gohei*, the symbol of the presence of the kami, is the most characteristic *torimono* of *kagura*. However, in some places the *gohei* is combined in ritual with Buddhist mudra gestures, as in Hanamatsuri or in Hayachine Kagura. In Hanamatsuri, *gohei* are even used to form sacred Mikkyō signs in the steam of the boiling cauldron. The *shakujō*, a Buddhist ritual tool much used by the *yamabushi*, is in many *kagura* traditions turned into a *torimono*, like the *gohei*. Examples of the combined use of *shakujō* and *gohei* can be seen in Ōmoto Kagura and Shiiba Kagura. The use of tools of exorcism in *kagura*, especially swords, bows and arrows, though very ancient, has been reinforced by the Shugendō ritual heritage and its association with Fudō Myōō.

Yet another aspect of Mikkyō influence on *kagura* dances can be seen in the dance itself. The frequent use of mudras, as well as special magical steps (*henbai*), has again been adopted directly from Shugendō practice. The most widespread mudras in *kagura* are those of the *yamabushi*'s *kuji* charm with

23 See Honda (1954).

24 Miyake (1971), pp. 110–26.

25 On Ōmoto Kagura, see, for example, Ushio (1985); on Hanamatsuri, see, for example, Hayakawa Kōtarō (1994); on Shiiba Kagura, see Watanabe and Watanabe (1996).

its nine mudras. In many *kagura* performances, mudras are carefully displayed as part of the dances (for example, in Hanamatsuri, in Nō Mai and Hōin Kagura of northeastern Japan, and elsewhere). Thus, it is not uncommon to see a dancer masked as Amaterasu Ōmikami "throwing" mudras around a *kagura* stage.

To take a closer look at this combined tradition as presented in *kagura* performance, let us now turn to our case study of the *yamabushi kagura* genre: the Take school of Hayachine Kagura.

The Take school of Hayachine Kagura

Mount Hayachine in Iwate prefecture (northeastern Japan) is famous for the ancient tradition of its two *yamabushi kagura* schools, Take and Ōtsukunai, collectively referred to as Hayachine Kagura. Hayachine Kagura displays strong Shugendō influence in every aspect of its performance.[26] However, like any *kagura*, it does not speak an explicit and obvious Buddhist language. On the contrary, outwardly it seems to be very "Shinto"-oriented, retelling the myths of *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*, and performing the dances of kami. No bodhisattva ever makes an appearance on the stage of Hayachine Kagura, only a variety of kami – as is indeed the case in most other *kagura* schools in Japan. This kami-orientation is especially obvious in the *kagura* texts and narratives. The characterization of this *kagura* as "Shinto" was enhanced by the impact of government policy during the Meiji period.[27]

We know from the scarce historical records of Mount Hayachine that there was a direct Shingon connection to this *kagura*. Myōsenji, the Shingon temple on Mount Hayachine, functioned for several centuries as its center of worship. The lineage-houses of Hayachine Kagura lived around it and served as its caretakers. Unfortunately, several fires on Mount Hayachine have destroyed most records from the *kagura*'s formative years, and it is now difficult to trace its history.[28] However, the presence of a Shingon temple and school of thought on Mount Hayachine must have had its impact on Hayachine Kagura.

Though anonymous, there is no doubt that the creators and choreographers of this *kagura* have been deeply influenced by Shugendō doctrine and practice, and hence by *honji suijaku* thought. It is fairly obvious that they created this *kagura* carefully and purposefully to reflect and propagate their Shugendō world-view.[29]

The Take village, situated high on the western slope of Mount Hayachine (where rice cannot grow), has until recent times relied on *kagura* for its

26 Honda (1971); Averbuch (1995).

27 Ōhasama (1983a), pp. 270–6.

28 See Averbuch (1995), pp. 44–50; Ōhasama (1983a), pp. 89–102, 166–78, 199–200, and 210–14; Ōhasama (1983b), pp. 103 and 693–755; Sugawara (1979), pp. 174–7; Ono (1984), pp. 97, 104–12 and 128–9.

29 Averbuch (1995), pp. 47–8; Honda (1971), pp. 513–14.

survival. Its historical rivalry with its "sister school" of Ōtsukunai has contributed to both schools' excellent artistic quality. Hayachine Kagura is an itinerant *kagura*. The group of Take, for example, used to spend the early two or three months of every year touring the villages at the foot of Mount Hayachine, performing their dances and rites and collecting rice and other gifts as payment. Those two months of yearly rounds used to sustain the village of Take for the rest of the year. In their capacity as *kagura* performers of the *yamabushi* tradition, they also performed rites of purification, fire prevention, and healing, and bestowed blessings of fertility, prosperity, and good luck. Thus the *kagura* dances have functioned both as entertaining performances and as magical rituals. This multifunctional characteristic is typical for the general liminal and boundary-blurring *yamabushi* activity.[30]

I have discussed Hayachine Kagura in great length elsewhere (Averbuch, 1995), so I will introduce it here only briefly. Hayachine Kagura has an active repertoire of forty-eight pieces, divided into five traditional categories, related to those of the Nō theater:[31]

1 *Shiki mai*: "ceremonial dances," always danced in a fixed sequence which describes the origin of the world, while alluding to the creation myths of the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*. The first is the Chicken dance (*Tori mai*), which depicts the creator gods Izanagi and Izanami in a purification and preparation dance signifying the dawn of the world. Next is the Dance of *Okina*, the old, white-haired ancestor who symbolizes long life, heavenly blessings, and the creation of heaven. The third is *Sanbasō*, "Old man No. Three," who is black, and symbolizes the creation of the earth. Fourth is the dance of the god *Hachiman*, a dance of purification and exorcism which, again, follows the creation of the world. Fifth is *Yama no kami mai*, Dance of the Mountain God, the dance of the maintenance of the world, for this is a dance for fertility and protection from calamities. Last is the Dance of *Iwatobiraki* or Opening the Rock-Cave Door, which tells of the origins of *kagura* itself, and recounts the myth of how the sun was lured from the heavenly cave, thereby reviving her and the entire world.
2 *Kami mai*: various other "deity dances" featuring additional mythical stories, such as the creation of the five grains (*Gokoku*), the heavenly descent of the gods to earth, and others.
3 *Za mai*: epic stories from the Japanese wars of the middle ages, and folk tales and dramas related to Nō.
4 *Kyōgen*, folk farces and jokes.
5 *Gongen mai*: the dances of the *gongen sama*, the embodied mountain god (see below).

30 Averbuch (1996).
31 Hoff (1978), pp. 182–9.

When a *kagura* group arrives in a village, it first makes the village round (*kado uchi*), in which the *gongen sama* visits and blesses all the shrines and homes around the village. Then the dancers gather for a full *kagura* performance in one of the houses. Today they are often invited to perform at shrine festivals (*matsuri*). The performances themselves, however, are carried out until this day almost without change.[32]

Let us now examine how the Take school's dance performance expresses esoteric Buddhist doctrines. As mentioned, no explicitly Buddhist characters are portrayed on stage. Here, Mikkyō lore is present in a somewhat hidden form: not in the details of the performance, but rather in the general principles that guide it. We will note that what is at work here is the *implicit power* of structure and symbols. The story line is mythical, the characters are kami; but the empowering structure underlying it all is implicitly esoteric Buddhist. In other words, these are forms of "dancing doctrine," that are *explicitly* traditional kami cults, and *implicitly* Mikkyō – a combination that is in accord with *honji suijaku*'s very conception of reality.

Before discussing the details of the *kagura*'s implicit structure, however, a note of clarification must be made. One should remember that the Mikkyō-inspired structure is not the exclusive one in this *kagura*. Like all folk *kagura* in Japan, Hayachine Kagura claims to originate from the mythical event of the opening of the rock-cave door and the reviving of the sun-goddess. Thus it also claims shamanic origins to its performance.

The shamanic structure of Hayachine Kagura is manifested in the setting of its stage. It is a stage open to three sides, where the drummer sits facing the screen while the flutist and the narrator hide behind it. Facing the screen, with his back to the audience, the drummer (usually the master of the *kagura* group) "draws" the dancers/deities out from their dressing room behind the curtain, which symbolizes the heavenly abode of the kami, and onto the stage, which symbolizes our world. The kami are thus summoned by the (shaman's) drum to come down and dance right here with/for/as their human folk. Every aspect of the *kagura* performance – costumes, headdresses, props, stage setting, music, and gestures – is geared towards attracting the kami and inviting them to dance.[33]

This shamanic structure is as important here as that of the esoteric Buddhist paradigm. The shamanic devices employed in the *kagura* – the *torimono*, the magical foot stamping and even the dance itself – have parallels in some *kagura* techniques that are associated with esoteric Buddhist practice.[34] One might suggest that the shamanic structure is the "traditional kami-cult" structure; and that it is explicit, for it forms the *raison d'être* of any performing art form that calls itself *kagura*, as a "given" feature

32 Averbuch (1995), pp. 59–64 and 110–63.
33 Averbuch (1995), pp. 79–110.
34 Averbuch (1995), pp. 111–14.

of *kagura*.[35] Our main concern here, however, is with the Mikkyō influences and undercurrents of this *kagura*, to which we shall presently return.

An example of Mikkyō doctrine: the "Three Mysteries" in practice

Kūkai's emphasis on physical practice is reflected in his "doctrine of the Three Mysteries" (*sanmitsu*). According to this doctrine, the whole of reality is understood as one vast emptiness, which is another way of referring to the ultimate truth, or the universal enlightenment, embodied in the universal buddha, Dainichi Nyorai.[36] The doctrine of the Three Mysteries teaches that the Body, Speech, and Mind of the universal buddha constitute universal enlightenment, the ultimate and undivided reality. The Three Mysteries of Body, Speech, and Mind are thus at the core of all Shingon ritual practice, in which mudra is the practice of the mystery of Body, mantra the practice of the mystery of Speech, and meditation, using the visual aid of mandalas, the practice of the mystery of Mind.

We can find this practice implemented in our *yamabushi kagura* dance. The mantras are provided by the drummer, who sits facing the curtain and draws the kami out of their abode to dance on the stage by means of sacred poems (*kamiuta*) in an incantation form, while drumming. In addition to the *kamiuta*, the drummer is also the keeper of the *kagura*'s secret mantras, which he utters at the beginning and end of each performance. There is frequent use of both hand- and feet-mudras in the dance – sacred gestures and steps in all directions, which indicate both Buddhist and Daoist influence. These mudras are generally protective in nature, creating "nets" of magical protection around the dancers, the stage and the village (more on this below). A variety of *kagura* characters, including heavenly deities such as Amaterasu Ōmikami, cast those protective mudras in performance. Moreover, mandala-shapes are constantly drawn and created in the air around the dancer while performing his gestures. Attention to directions becomes especially meaningful here, for the dancer is constantly drawing three-dimensional mandalas around himself, slashing the air with his sword in six directions (the four compass points, above and below), stepping in eight directions, and jumping and spinning in "four-times-four" directions.[37] All this choreography is calculated and deliberate; it symbolizes the creation of protective mandalas on stage.[38]

The use of mantras, mudras, and mandalas is not unique to Hayachine Kagura; they feature in many other *kagura* performances around the country.

35 Ishizuka (1984); Iwata (1990), (1992); Ushio (1985); Yamaji (1987); Averbuch (1998).

36 Yamasaki (1988), pp. 106–22.

37 Averbuch (1995), pp. 178–203.

38 Constructing a three-dimensional mandala in dance and gesture can be seen in such *yamabushi* rites as the aforementioned *kashō-barai*, and indeed in any *saitō goma* (outdoor fire ritual).

The doctrine of the Three Mysteries is not consciously recognized as a structural system in the *kagura*, but nevertheless points to two main features of esoteric Buddhism expressed in *kagura*. These are general Buddhist features which the Mikkyō schools especially emphasize: the structuring of reality through numerical systems, and the tendency to give concrete form to the abstract. I will here present the implicit Mikkyō patterning of Hayachine Kagura through these two prisms: (1) structure; first through the general structure itself, and then through its various sub-structures; (2) concretization, seen in several aspects, especially through the style and character of the dances.

Structure

At first sight, "structure" in the *kagura* refers to the construction of the sacred area of the stage, its enclosure by the sacred rope, the positioning of curtain and drum; in other words, to the building of a symbolic, shamanic universe on stage, which creates the ritual context for divine manifestations. The shamanic structure of the stage is obvious, and is absorbed by the viewers even before the *kagura* begins. The underlying Mikkyō structure, however, only emerges in performance.

As mentioned, structuring itself is typical to Mikkyō doctrine. Mikkyō uses the idea of structure in order to generate a unified image of the universe leading to enlightenment, which is the ultimate destruction of all structure. Indeed, as already seen in the aforementioned five categories of dance, this tendency to structure everything into neat or symmetrically balanced groups is a typical feature of Hayachine Kagura, too. Here, esoteric Buddhist doctrine is especially revealed in the basic binary structure of the *kagura*. Mikkyō influence is also seen in the deliberate attempt to maintain a doctrinal "balance of powers" in all aspects of the *kagura* performance: in its costumes, tools, gestures, and the dance itself.

The binary structure: internal and external pairing in Hayachine Kagura

One avenue this structuring has taken in Hayachine Kagura is the almost obsessive joining of everything into pairs of male and female, as in Yin-Yang cosmology or in the Mikkyō concept of the Womb and Diamond mandalas, the Compassion and Wisdom aspects of the universe. The esoteric Buddhist idea of perfection or completeness through the unity of opposites is familiar to us from many other esoteric traditions. The pairing tendency accords also with the Japanese folk way of portraying reality as pairs of husband-and-wife deities (itself perhaps an ancient echo of the Yin-Yang system). It is no coincidence that the two creator gods, Izanagi and Izanami, husband and wife, are portrayed in the first dance.

The synthesis of esoteric Buddhism in Japan is manifest in the system of the two syllables *A* and *UN*, the binary principle that combines the Yin-Yang paradigm with the Buddhist model of the Womb and Diamond mandalas as an expression of reality. *A* and *UN* stand for the first and last syllables of the Japanese *kana* syllabary, and represent the two cosmic aspects of male and female, beginning and end, whose union means perfection.[39] This division in the *kagura* is an obvious heritage of Shugendō that has been reproduced in the folk arts throughout Japan.

The pairing tendency extends to all aspects of performance. It starts with the groups themselves. As mentioned, Hayachine Kagura has in fact two schools, designated as "sister *kagura*": Take (our main case study) and Ōtsukunai.[40] Take is the masculine, "*UN*" school, and Ōtsukunai the feminine, "*A*" school. The *A-UN* relation itself is formally expressed in the schools' mountain-god masks, Take's tight-mouthed *UN* versus Ōtsukunai's open-mouthed *A* mask. However, the difference between the two schools also shows in a symmetrical pairing of everything else between them, as, for example, the gaudy colors of Ōtsukunai versus the more austere Take colors, or the male and female headdresses of rooster and hen. As a rule, in "masculine" Take, the hen headdress always steps out on stage first, while in "feminine" Ōtsukunai, it is the rooster headdress that makes the first appearance. This complementary behavior and reversal of roles corresponds with general *yamabushi* ritual tendencies, such as in Mount Haguro rites, where we find "water" lighting fire and "fire" extinguishing it.[41] This symbolism of reversal in *yamabushi* rituals is meant to display the unity of the two mandalas and the two aspects of reality they express.

In addition, the two schools even have their own complementary "male" and "female" steps. The male–female relation of the two schools is most obvious in their dance styles: Ōtsukunai's is softer and more feminine, and Take's is ferocious and powerful. The late master of Take school, Mr. Oguni, commented that this is the very nature of their respective characters: Take has the power that comes from the stomach, with the closed mouth groan of *UUUUN*, in contrast with the softer, weaker *AAAA*.[42]

Binary structure of the dances and the performance

The binary structure of the *kagura* extends to the very structure of the dances. Each *kagura* dance is divided into two parts: the first, slow *neri*, and the last, faster *kuzushi*. This binary division of the dances does not necessarily correspond to the cosmic scheme of things, or to the idea of *A-UN*. However, it

39 Yamasaki (1988), pp. 192–206.
40 Averbuch (1995), pp. 50–5.
41 Earhart (1970), pp. 127–30.
42 Averbuch (1995), p. 51.

is connected to other binary Japanese concepts that do: for example, to the *kagura*'s interpretation of the idea of *omote* and *ura*, "front and back," by which the sacred balance is maintained. One could call this aspect "the behavioral Yin-Yang." The *kagura* categories of "ceremonial dances" and "kami dances" – the two most sacred categories – are paired into *omote* and *ura* dances and are always performed according to this scheme.[43]

Omote mai pieces are the "front" and the formal dances of the male aspect, the serious and solemn, "heavenly" dances, that are performed at day. *Ura mai* pieces are the "back" and informal dances, the funny, the reflexive, "human," and earthy dances of the female aspect, and are performed at night.

Though it corresponds to the Yin-Yang scheme, this binary division of *omote* and *ura* is consciously connected with the performing arts' concept of *modoki*, the companion/opposite of the main character.[44] This concept is expressed in the *kagura* in the two consecutive dances of *Okina* and *Sanbasō*: the white (heavenly) and black (earthly) characters of the old god-kings. This is yet another pairing mechanism, and not the last of them; whether as *modoki*, or as *ura-omote*, Yin-Yang, Womb-Diamond, Compassion-Wisdom, or female-male, cosmic pairing pervades Hayachine Kagura in all its aspects.

The numerological structure

While the "Three Mysteries" are not recognized as a complete "threesome" in the *kagura*, other Shingon numerical systems are. For example, in addition to two, the numbers twelve and six are recognized as structural systems. The number twelve, paralleling the doctrine of the "twelve-fold chain of dependent co-origination," is one sacred *kagura* number. There are twelve *kagura* members in a group, representing the twelve generations of (seven) heavenly and (five) earthly gods; twelve months represent time; there are twelve numbers in a full performance, and twelve ceremonial dances, six *omote mai* and six *ura mai*.[45] The number six parallels the Shingon "Six Great Elements," and is represented in the pattern on the robe of the *gongen sama*, a pattern of six+one lines: the six elements stand for the one reality, the whole universe, the body of Dainichi Nyorai. There are six ceremonial dances, representing the six directions, the six manifestations of Kannon (who is the *honji* of Mount Hayachine), the *rokudō* or six realms of transmigration, the six sense-organs and the six conciousnesses, the six sacred steps (*roppō*), and so on, all corresponding to Mikkyō teachings.[46]

43 Averbuch (1995), pp. 118–19 and 164–8.

44 Honda (1958), pp. 12–14 and 27–32.

45 Averbuch (1995), pp. 57–8, 217–20, 164–7.

46 Sugawara (1979), pp. 56, 178–9, 184–7, and 267–8; Kikuchi (1987); Miyake (1985), pp. 198–212. The *gongen sama* of Ōtsukunai wears a pattern of 7–5–3 (*shichi-go-san*), which has its own set of esoteric and auspicious meanings.

In addition to that, the numbers four and five are also represented in a similar manner. Both are mainly directional, and they produce the general mandala structure on stage. As I have already mentioned, in several other *kagura* schools in Japan, the use of the system of "five elements" is seen in the five directions marked by *gohei* of five colors (e.g. in the canopies of Ōmoto Kagura, Hanamatsuri and Shiiba Kagura). It is often interpreted by scholars as part of the Daoist heritage of Shugendō magic, though it also accords with the Mikkyō system of five buddhas. In Hayachine Kagura, however, there is no canopy, and the *gohei* are all white. The quinary system, besides being connected to the dance categories, applies only to the choreography itself, e.g. to magical pentagramic patterns drawn by steps, or to the five directions of the stage (the four compass points and the center).[47] Most dances mark the four directions of the stage, but some magically oriented dances cover even the eight directions of the compass (for example, *Okina no mai*).

In this way, numerical systems abound in the *kagura* and control its structure, and thus its nature: the *kagura* is as ordered and balanced as reality itself.

Concretization

The tendency to "concretize" introduces yet another esoteric Buddhist pair of ideas, taken from the esoteric interpretation of the *Kegon-kyō*: the dual principle of *ri*, the abstract, versus *ji*, the concrete.[48] In Kūkai's system these correspond to the principles of the two cosmic mandalas,[49] and can be generally defined as:

Womb = dynamic = *ji* = concrete (female)
Diamond = static = *ri* = abstract (male)

Kūkai himself advocated the precedence of the concrete principle over the abstract: it is through the concrete that the abstract is manifested. As mentioned, the *yamabushi* have chosen to follow this path of Kūkai's thought, and the tendency to "concretize" is their interpretation of it. The tendency to prefer the concrete over the abstract is seen, for example, in the "mandalization" of mountains. The cosmic combination of the Womb and Diamond mandalas was "concretized" by Shugendō thought in the form of sacred mountains, the abodes of the gods, which came to be regarded as mandalas or "maps" of the universe, in which heavens and hells are present, and

47 Averbuch (1995), pp. 175–7 and 181–5; Hoff (1978), pp. 182–9.
48 Takakusu (1976), p. 76; Matsunaga and Matsunaga (1974), pp. 100–2.
49 Yamasaki (1988), pp. 126–49; Takakusu (1976), pp. 119 and 142–52.

through which the *yamabushi* progress towards their spiritual and physical goals.[50]

This Mikkyō tendency of concretization is obvious in *kagura* dance. I will present it here from three perspectives: as the physical transference of a charm from an intangible to a tangible form, as the concretization of a deity in a physical form, and as a way to concretize an intangible power through dance.

Concretization of the kuji *charm*

The idea of concretization is most conspicuous in the case of the *kuji* rings of the *kagura*. The *kuji*, or the charm of the "nine signs of power," is a basic charm of protection employed by *yamabushi* all over Japan.[51] The *kuji* charm (often preceded by the *goshinpō* charm) is the hallmark of *yamabushi* magic. It is itself a combination of Buddhist and Daoist magic, and is meant for protection against evil spirits and for exorcising demons. Every *yamabushi* learns to perform it as a part of his basic training. It consists in nine (*ku*) Chinese characters (*ji*), *rin-pyō-tō-sha-kai-jin-retsu-zai-zen*, which form a sentence that means approximately: "All our armies are gathered in front to protect us against the enemies," or "May those who preside over warriors all be my vanguard!"[52] Each of the nine syllables has an equivalent mudra that is formed while the *yamabushi* intones each of the nine syllables. Then the *yamabushi* forms the mudra of the sword with both hands, and with his right sword-mudra hand draws a protective "net" in the air in front of himself. This sword-drawn "net" is again made of nine strokes, drawn in lattice shape order (top-to-bottom, left-to-right), and accompanied by the nine syllables of the *kuji* spell.

However, in *yamabushi kagura*, the *kuji* charm has been given an additional form not found anywhere else: it has become a concrete object, a paper ring. The *kagura*'s *kuji* ring is made of a strip of white *gohei* paper cut into nine fringes and tied around the dancers' middle fingers. It is used in the most sacred of the dances and worn by divine characters. Thus, while dancing, the *kuji* rings are always in action: there is no need to repeat the charm continuously, for those tangible rings of white paper act as a proxy for the intangible charm of power, and ensure its continuous "presence" on

50 See Grapard (1982). The symbolic and the practical are always present in all aspects of *yamabushi* activity: costumes, tools, rites, and meditative practices are laden with esoteric symbolism meant to direct the practitioners towards enlightenment, as well as with practical meaning. *Yamabushi* often use magical tools and weapons to purify people or spaces and provide them with magical protection. See Earhart (1970), pp. 29 and 139–44; Miyake (1978), pp. 20–1 and 40; Blacker (1975).

51 See Miyake (1971), pp. 87–92; Waterhouse (1996).

52 Averbuch (1995), pp. 100–1 and Waterhouse (1996), p. 2.

stage. The use of the *kuji* rings can thus be taken as an extension of the Mikkyō tendency to concretize the abstract. The tangible, white *kuji* rings, glowing on the hands of the dancers, enact the *kuji* charm continuously.

Gongen sama*: the physically manifested deity*

Hayachine Kagura is classified as *shishi kagura* because it originated as the dance of the *shishi* (a "lion"), the mountain-animal mask that is the image of the deity.[53] This *shishi* or lion-head is often referred to as *gongen sama*, the "immediate" or "concrete manifestation" of the buddha (i.e. kami). The use of this designation of "*gongen sama*" manifests again the heritage of the esoteric Buddhist thought of Shugendō.

In the *kagura*, *gongen sama* is actually the name given to the local kami who is manifested in this special *shishi* head, a black head of an unidentified wild animal from the mountains (something between a dog, a deer, a bear, and a boar), which can clack its teeth noisily in blessing. The black head is frightening with its gleaming red eyes and its ear-piercing, snapping golden teeth. A long robe connected to the head constitutes its "dragon body," and the dancer manipulates the *gongen sama* from inside the robe.

The *gongen sama* is the hallmark of the *kagura*. It is the spirit or the temporary abode of the mountain god whom the *yamabushi* worship, and whom they carry with them into the houses of the parishioners to bless their homes and perform fire-prevention charms. The *gongen sama* is handled with utmost care, as a sacred object: the *kagura* performers always bow their heads and clap their hands before touching it, and they always carry it by hand, not in suitcases like the rest of the *kagura* tools. For in their eyes, this *gongen sama* is neither a tool nor a mask; it is indeed the physical manifestation, the abode of the kami of Mount Hayachine, brought along to bless the *kagura* patrons in the villages.

When a *kagura* group arrives in a village, it is the *gongen sama* who makes the round of visits to all the shrines. The *gongen* is also brought before each and every house to perform the charm of blessing and protection from fires. A *Gongen mai* is performed at the entrance of the house, then the *gongen sama* proceeds into the house to perform the charm of fire prevention over the stove and hearth. It holds a water-ladle between its teeth, and pours water on each source of heat. The *gongen sama* is also brought into direct contact with the people of the house: it blesses the people directly by "biting" their heads in a promise of protection. In each performance, it blesses with its bite the rice, *sake*, vegetables, water, as well as the people that are brought

53 The *shishi* or lion-head dances are probably of Chinese origin, and are widespread all over Japan. The *shishi* associated with the *yamabushi kagura* tradition of northeastern Japan is black, and clacks its teeth: Averbuch (1995), pp. 214–16; *Shishimai no kenkyū* (1980–5).

before it. Though often performed independently, the *Gongen mai* is also the concluding dance of any full Hayachine Kagura performance.

Although native kami are often perceived as formless spirits who dwell in divine symbols such as portable shrines, white *gohei* or green branches, for the villagers around Mount Hayachine, the kami appears as a concrete *gongen sama*. It is the very mountain deity itself who comes dancing into their kitchens to drive away the evil spirits, to bring protection and prosperity. Here, again, we see the general Mikkyō attitude of concretization in the manifested *gongen sama*, a mountain deity in a wood-and-hemp body.

Power concretized: style and character of the dances

The concretization tendency of the *yamabushi* is expressed in their emphasis on the physical experience of the body. Here dance plays an important role. The *yamabushi* express their preference for the physical and the concrete, i.e. for praxis, through its most fruitful expression: the dancing body.

We have already explored some of the Mikkyō and shamanic techniques of the *kagura* dance: the mudras (hand gestures), *henbai* (magic steps), and the drawing of mandalas on stage, which are all related to the practice of the "Three Mysteries." But beyond that, the concretization tendency is best expressed in the characteristics of the dances themselves, in the very style of dancing.

It is physically taxing and difficult to perform the dances of the Take school skillfully; some even see in its techniques a form of ascetic discipline.[54] The most conspicuous characteristic of the Take school of *kagura* is its energetic, ferocious style of dancing, and its powerful drumming, which render performances especially exciting. And indeed, the Take school's dancing and athletic skills are a part of the *yamabushi* tradition of displaying one's *gen*. Moreover, the dances are believed to be magically potent and efficacious. The transferring of power-energies, the characteristic excitement the dances provoke, is an experience shared by both the dancers and their audiences during the performance.[55]

I see the expression of transferring power through dance as the most important element of esoteric Buddhism that justifies calling this *kagura* "*yamabushi kagura*." The transferring of energy in the dance serves in fact to prove the doctrine of the unity of the concrete and the abstract. In the dance, it is translated into active magical power. And this is not just happening of its own accord; this transference of power via the dance is a deliberate and conscious act, a technique embedded in the very choreography of the dances.

54 Averbuch (1995), pp. 67–72.
55 Averbuch (1995), pp. 76–7 and 210–12.

As is well known, dance itself is among the most ancient and potent tools of power in human history, a time-honored transmitter of ideas and beliefs. Dance is executed by the very human body itself. It has a multisensory impact on audience and dancers alike, for the body and all its senses participate in the dance experience. In addition to the dance's influence on the senses of sight, hearing, touch, smell, etc., it has this special and unique power, called *kinesthetic power*, which is the reaction dance causes in its audience. It is the subliminal communication of the sense of bodily movement and tension, which has the power to arouse a sympathetic physical response in the viewer. This kinesthetic power is a central aspect of the powerful impact of dance on its audiences, and the crucial agent of transmitting the dance-power from dancer to viewer.[56]

Another aspect of the dance is its being a ritual activity itself, which also generates power; and, of course, the invocation of various power-symbols in the dance contributes to its impact. The *kagura*, in its fixed performance of *shiki mai*, enacts the symbolism of creation, which creates and recreates the whole world anew each time (rejoice Eliade!). It piles up symbols of power – mudras, mantras, and protection-mandalas, as well as its various fertility charms – to generate tremendous symbolic power.

However, in order for a magic charm to work, there must be a real, or what I elsewhere called a "raw," power behind its symbolic power.[57] Although everyone can say "abracadabra," only a real magician with real power can make it work. Such is the power of the ascetic, and the way to become one is to achieve *gen*, real magical power. For behind the magic formulas, mudras and mantras and sacred steps of the *yamabushi*, lies their real power which they have acquired through ascetic practice.

These two powers, the symbolic and the "raw," should not be confused. The symbols of power point to the real power, just as the flames around the image of Fudō Myōō symbolize his real, "raw" power. In the *kagura*, as in other *yamabushi* rituals, the *yamabushi* are not satisfied just to display their symbolic power; they must also display their real, "raw," power. It is an attempt to put into practice Kūkai's notion that the concrete is the preferred way, for it is the concrete which generates abstract power; an attempt, also, to prove that their "real" power feeds the symbols of power in the dance: the mudras and mandalas.

To put it in a different way, the magic of fertility is symbolically displayed in the charm; but such symbolical magic is not proven to work. One has to wait a year to see the results, when the rice ripens in the fields. It is indeed real power, but for the moment it is abstract. However, the energy which the dancer emits while dancing is immediate and direct. The kinesthetic impact

56 Hanna (1979), pp. 63–76 and 86–90; Royce (1977), pp. 194–214; Averbuch (1995), pp. 33–7.

57 Averbuch (1996), pp. 5–6.

of the dance is physically felt; it thus serves as the immediate proof of the power of the dance. It is the manifested concrete power through which the symbolical, abstract power gains its credibility.

The argument is complicated by the fact that "raw" power is generated both through the *yamabushi*'s actual ascetic practice and through the symbols of power acted out in their rituals. In other words, it is a combination of symbols of power with the actual power generated through asceticism. We can see the same thing in the *kagura*. The "raw" power of the dance is generated partly by the dance technique and partly by the symbols it evokes. This is a complicated relationship; the real power is reciprocal. It activates the symbols of power but is itself partly created by them. Though it is agreed that symbols of power produce power, the performers know well that their immediate performance, the energy emitted while dancing, is the true carrier of their power. Thus, similar to certain forms of ascetic training, there are some particular dance techniques, particular choreographic mechanisms, which create power in the dance.[58] Those techniques contribute to the exceptional energy and ferocity of the dances of the Take school. And, indeed, the audiences respond to these performances with great excitement, with shouts, cries, laughter, and fast heartbeats. The immediacy of this performed power, the fact that it is manifested in front of the audience's eyes, validates the long-range effects of the symbolic power, such as, for example, the promise of fertility for next year's crops. To wit: the concrete is the proof of the abstract.

Conclusion

I have here outlined the various performative aspects that display the impact of Mikkyō, or rather the Shugendō brand of Mikkyō practice, on *yamabushi kagura*. We have seen how Mikkyō notions implicitly manifest themselves through the careful structuring of performance itself and of every part in it, especially through the constant balance of binary pairs (e.g. the *A-UN* paradigm) and the various numerical systems that are applied to the structure of the *kagura*. We also found implicit Mikkyō influence in the *kagura* tendency to concretize, displayed through the use of the tangible charm of the *kuji* rings, the manifestation of the visiting deity as a dancing *gongen sama*, and, finally, through the expression and enactment of power in the dances themselves.

In terms of the identity of microcosm and macrocosm in Mikkyō cosmology, we find the "original ground," *honji*, which is the Buddhist world-view underlining Shugendō thought, implicitly present in the structure and character of the *kagura*; and we see how this implicit *honji* is translated into the explicit "traces" or *suijaku*, the kami who dance on the stage. However, we

58 Averbuch (1995), pp. 69–70.

must not forget that these implicit/explicit aspects are always brought to a form of union, for, as we have noted, the *honji* and the *suijaku* always form an ultimately unified entity. There is no opposition between the "implicit Buddhist" and the "explicit kami-oriented" aspects here; these are rather complementary aspects, and must have been deliberately chosen by the *yamabushi* creators of this *kagura* to express their philosophy.

Thus also, the use of the *kagura* dance itself is no casual choice of the *yamabushi*. For as we have seen, the power of the dance makes it all possible: the union of humans and gods, of the abstract and the concrete, and of the two great mandalas. Dance is the best method to express the ultimate goal of "becoming a buddha in this very body." Its special power enables the *yamabushi* not only to dance their doctrine, but also to make their doctrine dance.

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